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THE
LETTERS OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT
1811—1814

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VOLUME IV. *The Letters of 1815-1817*

THE
LETTERS OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT
1811—1814

EDITED BY

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ASSISTED BY

DAVIDSON COOK

W. M. PARKER

and others

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George Thomson, the Friend of Burns. His Life and Correspondence. By J. Cuthbert Hadden. London, 1898

Hawick Arch. Soc.

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Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart. [By J. G. Lockhart.] 7 vols. Edinburgh, 1837-38; and second edition. 10 vols. Edinburgh, 1839

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Letters From and To Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq. Edited by Alexander Allardyce. With a Memoir by the Rev. W. K. Bedford. 2 vols. Edinburgh and London, 1888

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The Skene Papers. Memories of Sir Walter Scott by James Skene. Edited by Basil Thomson. London, 1909

Stirton's Leaves, 1929

Leaves from My Manuscript Portfolio. By the Rev. John Stirton. Forfar, 1929

Surtees Memoir

Memoir of Robert Surtees. By G. Taylor, with additions by J. Raine. (Publications of the Surtees Society.) Newcastle, 1852

Sutherland Book

The Sutherland Book. By Sir William Fraser. Vol. ii. Edinburgh, 1892

Willis's Current Notes

Willis's Current Notes. London, 1851-57

1811

(September 1811 continued)

TO LADY ABERCORN

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am just favoured with your kind letter & I have the pleasure to inform you that the matter in which you take so unreserved an interest is now at length in an apparently fair train. Mr. Home's application to be put on the superannuation list has been remitted by the Treasury Board to the Crown council here whose opinion I have every reason to think will be favourable & given without delay. Lord Mellville whom I waited upon so soon as he came to Scotland assures me in the most positive manner that so soon as this opinion is obtained the matter will go through of course & without a moments delay. I have not heard from Mr. Arbuthnot but I have every reason to think that I had the benefit of his influence like that of the sun on a cloudy day when it lights us without showing itself. I therefore hope it will be brought to bear having yet more to dread from Holland house than even your friendly anxiety anticipated : for your Ladyship must know that last summer I met Lord Holland very unexpectedly at a dinner club in Edinburgh a *rencontre* which I would have avoided if I could.¹ He wished to make *patte de velours* to me but as my blood was boiling at the undeserved & mischievous mention he had recently

¹ See Lockhart's account of this *rencontre* : " I conclude the affair of Thomas Scott with a brief extract from a letter which his brother addressed to him a few weeks later : ' Lord Holland has been in Edinburgh and we met accidentally at a public party. He made up to me but I remembered his part in your affair and *cut* him with as little remorse as an old pen.' The meeting here alluded to occurred at a dinner of the *Friday Club*." According to Lord Jeffrey " this was the only example of rudeness he ever witnessed in him in the course of a lifelong familiarity."

made of me in the House of Lords I cut him with as little remorse or ceremony as I would an old pen ; which I suppose would hardly increase his good inclinations towards me. Lord Moira would I believe be well disposed to stand my friend but I hope I shall stand in need of no one from the advanced state of my little matter. I will not fail to acquaint you when it is settled.

I am truly glad the Kembles liked Ashestiel.¹ Their visit gave us much pleasure on their own account but especially as being friends of your Ladyship. He was unfortunately affected with the asthma when he was with us so I did not hear him read which I regretted very much. I carried him over one day to see the Braes of Yarrow so famous in romantic ballad & pastoral song & which really answer in picturesque beauty to their poetical reputation. Jo: Kemble seemed very much pleased with his little excursion notwithstanding his illness which made walking inconvenient.

Your Ladyship never told me if you had made my apology or more properly vindication acceptable to Miss Owenson about the review which I was unfoundedly reputed to have written. I have every respect for her talents & heartily wish her happiness in her intended change of situation. I hope the realities of life will not lead her to renounce the "wild romance" with which she has so frequently embellished it.

The authoress of *Selfcontroul* is the wife of a revd. Mr. Brunton a clergyman in Edinburgh² ; at least that seems the admitted report. I never saw the lady & probably never may. Miss Baillie is the only *writing* lady with whose manners in society I have been very much delighted. But she is simplicity itself & most of them whom I have seen were the very cream of affecta-

¹ "I heard of you from the Kembles they were delighted with you, with Mrs Scott, your children & your place."—Lady ABERCORN, 9th September 1811.

² Professor of Oriental languages in the University.

tion. My poor friend Miss Seward was no exception to this general rule for she was both affected & exigeante. But then she was a beautiful reader & reciter & told anecdotes most excellently well. She has given a most romantic account of a visit (the only one) I ever [paid?] in one of her letters—pray read it my dear friend & tell me if you would have recognised me in the attitudes of her poetical description—Mrs. Grants work on the Highlands is lively spirited & enthusiastic—her imagination however sometimes runs off with her from the region of humble fact into that of sentimental romance.

The only literary news I have is that Lucien Bonapartes Epic is on eve of going to press—10000 copies are to be printed. It is an Epic poem entitled *Charlemagne ou La Rome Delivreee en xxiv Chants*—a dreadful sound enough to make one yawn their jaws off the hinges. Miller (whether by the authors desire I know not) made me the strange proposition that I should translate it offering mountains etc. which I refused without staying to compute whether it would not have built up my little cottage—But a French Epic & by a Bonaparte, I should have expired under the task. I suppose they will get Tom Campbell to do *Charlemagne* into English. But they must bribe high for the task will assuredly prove a dreary one. I hear of no other literary news nor of any books lately published worth reading. But this may be my ignorance as I have been lately solely employed in coursing hares & spearing salmon.

We are all anxious to know how our presidency will be arranged. The Regent has written personally requesting the Chief Baron to accept of the situation in order to vacate his present excellent sinecure (such it is comparatively at least) for the accomodation of William Adam.¹

¹ In writing to Scott on the 11th, from Ninewells, Hume reports the receipt of a letter reporting that the Prince Regent had signed a warrant “naming me Clerk to the King’s Processes for Scotland. . . . Are not you

The Chief B. had already refused to accede to an arrangement which promised him great trouble responsibility attendance & risque of reputation. But it is now said that he is to give way on a Barons gown being secured to his brother Will. Dundas. I suspect these intrigues & coquettries have suspended Scotch promotions & mine amongst others. But I begin to be much of the mind of the old politician who would believe nothing that he heard & very little of what he saw. Therefore I do not aver [?] that Lady Mellville has got a pension of £1200 though I hope that report will prove true. It is however *certain* that young Drummond grandson of Lord Mellville has cancelled bonds due to him by our deceased friend to the amount of £14000. Such an act of generosity induces one to think that there is still some goodness extant.

I will take care the large Don Roderick goes safe to Mr. Arbuthnott if it has not yet gone. Mrs. Scott offers her respectful compliments & I am ever my dearest friend your much obliged & very grateful

W. S.

ASHESTIEL 18 Sept. [1811]

The verses in the Register were written some years ago when I retreated [?] from the active prosecution of my proffession as a Barrister to my present official situation as a Clerk of Session.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO MRS. SCOTT

[1811]

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Jack leaves us today being desirous of getting to Edinr. I hope you will find him

Clerk to the King's Processes? Have you resigned the Station and why? . . . The only conjecture I can form is that George Home's Pension has been carried thro' and your worship put on full pay and that it is part of the arrangement that you resign the King's Clerkship &c."

pretty well. I am going to the Circuit next week and Charlotte goes with me to make some long promised visits at Teviotdale. If your courage and the good weather lasts we shall be delighted to see you on the week following or if you dont care to be troubled with company (Colin McKenzie and his wife) in the end of the month. My business is at length in full activity & I hope will go through gallantly. I wrote to Tom fully on the subject of the paymastership.¹ I am dog-tired after the Selkirk ball which must be apology for a short letter. Charlotte sends kind love. She is to be Queen of the Ball next year. Yours most affectionately

W. S.

ASHESTIEL *Friday*

[*Law*]

¹The previous letter, this, and others which follow are concerned with Tom Scott's new venture. After his failure as a solicitor (see earlier letters to Lady Abercorn) Tom had retreated to the Isle of Man, where he got a commission in the Militia and carried on what work came his way in the post to which his brother appointed him. He had married Eliza Macculloch of Ardwell. In March of this year the Fencibles were disbanded and Thomas looked round for a fresh means of livelihood. On 12th September 1811 he writes to his brother: "Referring to a letter to his mother" . . . "relative to the situation of Paymaster in the 70th regiment which through the interest of Colonel Ross there is every reason to expect I may obtain." Two difficulties had to be overcome. As with Walter's own suit the present occupant had to be pensioned off. Further, two sureties in £1000 had to be secured. A series of letters from Tom deal with his anxieties during a visit to London. Walter, as before, became one of the securities. The post was obtained, and after some time in Scotland and Ireland the regiment proceeded to Canada. The most touching letter of the series is the last from Tom's wife of 11th November acknowledging a bill for £100 sent by Walter to help clear off debts in the island: "I return you the most heart-felt thanks for your brotherly conduct and affectionate expressions towards us. I hope the new plans will be more successful than any we have hitherto form'd but I am not quite so sanguine as I once was—it is however impossible for us to live much longer in our present situation. . . . All my family are going on in very good health. . . . Walter an active little fellow but as to being an honour to the *name* your own fine Boy as well as mine will find that you have render'd it a hopeless task to give any additional Brilliancy to the name of Walter Scott." Scott later had to forfeit his security. See *Notes and Queries*, 11th Series, vol. xii. pp. 173-5.

TO MRS. SCOTT

[Sep. 1811]

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I have your letter today and if Col Ross is serious in his proposal I am sure I should be glad to do any thing in my power to further Tom's getting into an active situation of some kind or other. I own I dread the idea of his having to do with money which is not his own well knowing his former habit of carelessness in that respect. At the same time it is hard to say that his freinds will give him no chance of redeeming his fortune and of showing that he had taken a lesson from the hard school of adversity. If General Stuart will be security for him for £1000, I would propose that Tom should give me an assignation in security to the extent of £500, over the funds in the Trustees and that he will suffer the money to remain in Scotland the Interest being remitted to him so soon as the funds are made effectual. I will be the other security ; in which I can only at the worst lose £500, which I would rather run the risque of than refuse my assistance at this moment. But I think I cannot go further than this in justice to those who have claims on my little fortune in case anything should happen to me, & I think you cannot take it amiss that I should wish some security against being ultimately a loser to the extent of £1000. It will depend entirely on his own regularity and oeconomy whether any one is a loser by him at all and I sincerely trust for his own sake he will be very attentive to the sides of his duty which are extremely strict. Jack tells me that the pay is about 15/ a day without any perquisites. The accepting the situation will not affect his pension here. As he must follow the regiment I am not aware how he will dispose of Mrs. Scott & the poor children.

I should be glad that Tom knew how far I can and am disposed to assist him in this matter and I leave it entirely to your judgement how to communicate it. I hope the scheme has some foundation in reality and that General

Stuart will lend his assistance without which I fear nothing can be done in it.

I hope you will be able to make out this letter which is sadly scrawld owing to a severe bilious headache for which I shall take some medicine to night—I wish with you the place could have been had on other terms & I wish it were a better one. But it is bread in the meantime and as it would be the extremity of folly in Tom to refuse it so I think it would be harsh in any more fortunate member of the family to refuse his aid. As for Mr Hawthorn I long since gave up any assistance from him but I should suppose Mr. Hay Donaldson could settle Toms accounts with Mr. Wright which have been far too long left open. I am Dear Mother Yours most affectionately

ASHESTIEL *Monday*

WALTER SCOTT

Mrs. Walter Scott George Street Edinr.¹

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ Mrs. Scott's reply is as follows :

From MY MOTHER

[*September 1811*]

MY DEAREST WALTER,—I hope your Headache is better I fear you have hurt yourself by your anxiety about Tom, I have suffered much upon the same Score, but Thanks to God I am greatly better to Day—I agree entirely with you that Tom should accept the place if Gl. Stuart will be security for £1000. I think you do a great Deal if you are bound for £500 upon Tom giving you a proper surety in the way you mention. And as for the other £500 you know that I was to leave 5 hund. to Tom. I will give you Security upon that and leave it in any hands you please the intrest to be paid him but the money to lye for your relief so long as He is in that situation, so that if it is lost it is Lost to Himself, but I hope in God what he has suffered will make him more cautious for the future I would have wished it had been a situation where he had nothing to do with money but I am happy to get him in Active Life again as to Mrs. Scott and the children should He be called abroad I Fancy She and they would board with her mother at least I think it would be better than for her to keep House & I well know she would not wish to come here, Mr. Auld says she is much set upon Toms getting this place I have only time to say Farwell Let me know how you are God bless you and preserve you Love to all your Family And I ever am my Dearest Walter your most aff Mother

ANN SCOTT

I shall write Tom tomorrow and state the business as you Desire
[*Nat. Lib. Scot.*]

TO MRS. WALTER SCOTT

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I found your letter with the inclosures & I really think you ought rather to be pleased than to make yourself uneasy with the prospect of Toms again entering upon active life. I have written to him that I shall be satisfied as to the nature of the security you propose for £500, and will take my chance of the other £500. This will leave his share of my fathers funds altogether unburthend & by an assignment in security to them he may I hope be able so far to cover the risque of any friend who shall come forward as his second security that what remains will not exceed the venture some one may be disposed to take for friendships sake. I have begd him to come to Edinr. to arrange this and settle his long outstanding accompts with Mr Wright ; and I have made the expences of his journey easy to him so I hope we shall see him one of these days for I am satisfied nothing can be done without his personal exertions. You will have you see occasion for your spare bed though little Walter is not less obliged to you and his parents on his behalf than if he had accepted your affectionate offer. The truth is besides that with the sweetest disposition in the world and very tolerable parts the little gentleman has a propensity to idleness I hope not greater than is natural at his age but which often requires a stronger check than you my dear mother would chuse to apply or perhaps than any one would apply except a father. So that I think just at this period of his life he would rather be a plague than a comfort to you. He reads from one to two hours latin with me every day so I hope to keep him up to the class even if he should be a few days later of joining them especially as his memory is one of the strongest I have observed. They will all be in town about the middle of October and will be proud to attend you in such numbers

and at such times as may conduce most to your amusement.

Pray my dear Mother keep up your spirits. I am sure Tom will do well could we once get him launchd into active life for opportunities are never wanting to assist those who are labouring to assist themselves. I have been at Bowhill for a day or two which prevented my sooner receiving your parcel. I will return the inclosed letter by the first safe opportunity & am dear Mother Your dutiful & affectionate Son

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 30 *Sept.* [1811]

[*Law*]

To WILLIAM ERSKINE

ASHESTIEL, 5th *Octr.* 1811

MY DEAR ERSKINE,—My unfortunate Brother Tom has once more a glimpse of fair weather & I am about to lend him my shoulders to push him again into active life. General Ross has given him the paymastership of his regiment & as the General expects a Government in the West Indies he proposes in that event to make Tom his secretary. This is bread in the mean while with a fair prospect in future. I have agreed to become one of his sureties to the extent of £1000, for the moiety of which sum I have counter-security & the remainder if the worst should come to the worst would be matter rather of inconvenience than distress. It is necessary to have two referees as to the responsibility of these sureties & I have taken the liberty to name you & Colin McKenzie as sufficiently acquainted with my circumstances to say that I am held a good man for £1000.¹ If therefore you receive

¹

WAR-OFFICE 18th *October* 1811

SIR,—Walter Scott Esq a Principal Clerk of the Court of Session being proposed as Surety to Government for One Thousand Pounds, and a Reference being given to you with respect to his Responsibility, for the

a letter from the Treasury or War Office inquiring into my circumstances you will please to answer it according to the inclosed *formula* which you see binds you in no way excepting as to your good faith. I shall be glad if this opportunity shall really be profitable to this unhappy man & while I cannot in your friendly ear suppress my doubts I feel that I really should act in an unbrotherly manner did I not aid him to avail himself of it at any risque not positively unjust to my own family.

I was at Bowhill on Wednesday. Lord D. was highly pleased with the issue of the Head Court & no less so as well as Lady D. with your visit. I think there is a very handsome foundation laid for our active & obliging friend Hay Donaldson.

Stark & Terry are here labouring with "cauk & keel" at my cottage. The former has given me a most beautiful fanciful & at the same time convenient plan. He seems to be a very amiable as well as a most ingenious man & I truly grieve to observe that his health is so precarious. The weather has been infamous. Not a word from the Advocate who had his papers on the 25 ulto. Yours ever
my dear Erskine

W. SCOTT

[*Stevenson*]

said trust, I am directed to request that you will acquaint me, for the Information of the Secretary at War, with such Particulars relative to Mr. Walter Scott's Circumstances and Situation as may be requisite to found an Opinion as to his eligibility to become Surety for the above Sum.

If you are not acquainted with the particulars of Mr. Walter Scott's Circumstances, you will be pleased to state whether from your general knowledge thereof, you would yourself take his Personal Bond for the above Sum. I am, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

ROBT. LUKIN
Pro Sec at War

William Erskine Esq Advocate Edinburgh

[*Stevenson*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE¹

MY DEAR SIR,—Your invaluable packet arrived in all safety and was received with the gratitude which your unceasing exertions in my behalf so peremptorily demand of me. I am much obliged to Mr. McNally for his goodness in permitting a copy to be made for me of the curious letter you forwarded : that of Mrs. Pratt (which is a very capital one and in the Deans best style) appears in Nichols edition. I will collate it however carefully. I need not say how curious I shall be to rummage the contents of the precious box which you so kindly promise me access to.

I am gravel'd in a matter where Mr. Theo: Swift may probably be able to help me out. Lord Bathurst on 3rd Sept. 1735 writes to the Dean enquiring into the truth of a story he had seen in the papers of one Butler a shooting parson. The whole letter refers to this subject and the report alluded to seems to have borne (whether truly or falsely I cannot tell) that a clergyman of this name had attempted to shoot Swift. The Deans answer is not given so no light can be thrown on so extraordinary an incident from that quarter. You and your allies whom you have so kindly enlisted in my cause must help me through this sticking place if possible. I was much gratified by your

¹ On 26th September Hartstonge had written reporting his return from Edinburgh ; his visit to Theophilus Swift with a copy of *Don Roderick* ; and other details, and adds : "Mr. McNally I have seen who was indeed exceedingly flattered by your Letter & he obligingly said had not your Letter been written upon both sides the page it shd. have been framed in gold." He forwards some communications from his copies of productions of Swift ; also of "a Letter of Dean Swift to Mrs. Pratt" from Mr. Lawson, "exceedingly witty." He adds a long story about the charge of rape and its propagator, who went mad and died in Swift's hospital for lunatics. He has visited the tomb of Burns and transcribes the inscription. He reports Miss Owenson's marriage to Dr. Morgan, now a knight : "'The wild Irish girl' was given in marriage by his Grace of Richmond and the most noble Abercorn" at Baronscourt, Strabane. The verses Scott refers to had been written by Hartstonge at Clovenford on 6th September 1811, "On leaving Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest : the seat of Walter Scott, Esq."

verses from Clovenford which intimated that our power had in some measure kept pace with our wish to make Ashestiel pleasant and comfortable to you. The season is now closing upon us for the last time in this place of retreat and we are busied on all hands making preparations to remove next season to our princely domain of 100 acres at Abbotsford. Like other potentates I have had to defend my realm against invasion and that against no less powerful a foe than father Tweed himself: but by dint of a dam dyke which might do honor to Holland itself I have I hope secured the safety of my territories. The children went to Edinburgh on Saturday where we must follow in the course of three weeks in all which mutations and peregrinations I expect and require of you to take as deep an interest as you can since my correspondence is not likely to afford you more valuable information. Only I may add that I hear with pleasure from James Ballantyne that your poems are gone to press. He informs me you have resolved on a small and limited impression and I greatly approve your having done so. It is much more agreeable to be speedily called upon by the voice of the public for a new edition than to run the risk of lying long on the counters of the Booksellers. One somehow would have a book resemble the author in which case yours will I am sure be sought after instead of being intrusive or neglected.

Your information of the rise and progress of the fable of the Rape is curious and Mr. Parkers receipt for repairing the imprudence he had been guilty of, in propagating the Calumny was one of the most singular I ever heard.

I am glad you saw the tomb of poor Burns—the simple inscription you observed, was the composition of his wife, the once lovely Jean. It is a disgrace to our country that something more worthy of his fame is not erected over his grave, but altho frequently proposed it has uniformly fallen to the ground for want of subscriptions

or from some disagreement about the nature of the monument to be erected, indeed we are not famous for doing any thing to preserve the memory of our Bards. I have been these twenty years member of a Club for erecting a monument upon Ednam hill to the memory of Thompson but alas we have never to this day been able to collect above a very few hundred pounds totally inadequate to making any thing respectable. This I presume will find you returned from Carlow and as by the 12th of Novb. I must be at my official oar, your future favours had better be directed to Castle Street. Charlotte begs to offer her best compts and I am ever yours truly obliged

W. SCOTT

24th Oct. 1811. ASHESTIEL

Ps. I have been very successful of late in coursing. Have you ascertained if your Dr. Hill of Dublin be my Dr. Hill. Mrs. Scott has her kindest thanks for the Lavender water which is most excellent.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO MRS. SCOTT

MY DEAR MOTHER,—You need not be anxious about Tom as I have had two letters from him from London ; his appointment seems quite secure and he is only fretted about some official delays which he must submit to with patience. I have sent him some letters which may assist him in getting over them or at least make his stay in London less expensive and more pleasant. His regimt. the 70th being at Stirling we shall probably see him so soon as his affair is settled. I have agreed to become his Surety for £1000,, understanding you are to secure £500 for my relief in case of accidents which God forbid. Whether I should ever use such a power of relief or no might depend much upon my own circumstances at the

time but I cannot but think Tom will be as cautious in his conduct or fully more so if he thinks he may involve his own family as if it only concernd mine. Mean while his appointment goes on. I certainly agree with General Stuart that it is not the line most adviseable but what can Tom do or what can we advise in the circumstances? It is present bread and can easily be resignd if any thing better is to be had. So pray keep up your spirits upon his account for any thing is preferable to indolence and inactivity and many opportunities occur to the person who is in the way of profiting by them.

I shall be much guided by Mr. Donaldson's opinion in the case of Sir James Nasmyth but nothing can be done in it for a fortnight at soonest by which time I will be in town. Lord Newtouns opinion being unfavourable (as it often was when a *black-neb* was in the field) we cannot be worse than we were. The said Sir James has been *ousted* of his influence in the Borough of Peebles which has returnd to its allegiance under the Buccleuch family which gives them another member next parliamt. I understand Sir James is to be pursued by the Innkeepers for the expence of the entertainments given by his candidate Maxwell of Carriden which have never been paid! Thus gentlemen in their zeal for *liberty* are apt to forget an old fashiond Virtue calld Justice it is well we have courts of law to refresh their memory.

Charlotte sends her best love and begs you will kiss the Oes¹ for us. Do not plague yourself with more than one at a time as they are by no means followers of Pythagoras. I remain Dear Mother Your dutiful & affectionate Son

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 27 October [1811]

[Law]

¹ i.e. grand-children.

TO MRS. SCOTT

MY DEAR MOTHER,—The inclosed will apprise you that Toms business is nearly finishd. As it would be highly unfit that he should enter upon his office with any temptation to incroachment I have sent Mrs. Scott £100 to meet the debts he apprehends and when I come to town I will endeavour to raise the remainder. I have mentiond to him frankly the reasons of œconomy & propriety which should make him settle Mrs. Scott in the event of his being separated from her rather in Dumfries than in Edinr. as from an expression in his letter I think he has the latter place in view. But they must take their own way. He tells me he has £80 a year of rent in the Island his pension is £130, & the Interest of Mrs. Scott's fortune £75. Supposing therefore that all the money they took with them is spent which I doubt is the case they have still nearly three hundred a year to live upon in addition to his pay of £300 or £400 more. This with œconomy is amply sufficient for comfort and decency and without œconomy as many thousands would be too little.

I expect my own matter to be speedily settled now. It has been before the Crown Council and a very kind letter from David Monypenny (now Solicitor General) promises me a speedy and favourable result. I have some hopes of getting a *back-spang*¹ as you would call it for a quarter or two ; no deaf nuts where the income is so large. I shall be better off than if I had a gown which I might otherwise have been now gaping for. Charlotte sends her love and in hopes of our speedily meeting I am ever my dear Mother Yours most affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 27 October [1811]

[Law]

¹ A favourite expression of Scott's.

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

ASHESTIEL 27 October 1811

I WAS delighted my dear Sharpe to see your hand again after so long a cessation of our correspondence. The verses are very pretty indeed shall doubtless appear in the next Register if I have any interest with the publisher. The work is making a most respectable progress. Upwards of 2000 have been sold by the Scottish publishers alone. I hope you do not intend to leave Scotland without a viz: to Auld Reekie where I should rejoice much in a social chat with you. We were singing your praises the other day at Bowhill when Lady Dalkeith bore a distinguished part in the chorus. But I think you might have fought your way as far as the Forest in quest of adventures during the last season. Next year I can hardly offer you hospitality as I am about to leave this place which has been for seven years my palace of indolence. The situation to which I shall remove next season is much less romantic but as Touchstone says of Audrey it is a poor thing but *mine own*. It consists of a *haugh* & brae of about 100 acres stretching along the Tweed for three quarters of a mile, commanding a fine sweep of the river and embosom'd in fancy's eye with wood but to the visual orb presenting nothing more lofty or more verdant than some special turnips. Meanwhile great part of my future groves *factura nepotibus umbram*¹ are travelling quietly in the shape of acorns from Trentham to London by the benevolence of our kind Marchioness. Yet we contrive to make a bustle with thinning and pruning about ten acres of starved firs in *esse* awaiting with hope and confidence the planting and growth of our fair oaks in *posse*. So runs the world away. I intend to build a little cottage on this spot next season & to inhabit a small farm house during the time it is rising.

¹ Vergil, *Georg.* ii. 57-8.

I have not yet read Miss Seward's letters. God knows I had enough of them when she lived for she did not imitate the ancient romans in brevity. If my curt and comical letters had been publishd (which Heaven forfend) our correspondence would have been exactly the dialogue between *Aldiborontifoscofornio* and *Rigdumfunnidos*.¹ Yet she was an uncommon woman & baiting her conceit and pedantry had some excellent points about her. Had she mingled more in general society and been less the directress of a little circle we should have had less tracaserie and more good sense in her letters.

We shall be delighted to have your contribution to the Register. But I wish you would give us an original prose article chosing your own subject and treating it in your funny way : it would help us greatly. Scots are in general too grave for humourous essays you are a special exception & your friends should profit by it. Southey who succeeded to the historical department which you declined is rather too prolix and minute though often vigourous and eloquent.

Pray let me hear from you soon and be it to say we are soon to meet in Edinburgh which would give me particular pleasure. I must be there on the 12 Novr. Believe me most truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

What has become of your genealogical work.

Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe Esq
Hoddam Castle, Ecclefechan.

[*Hornel*]

¹ Characters in Henry Carey's burlesque *Chrononhotonthologos* (1734). Scott gave these names to James and John Ballantyne respectively.

TO MRS. SCOTT

[November 1811]

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I have a letter from Tom¹ this morning dated Wednesday last. His business was finishd to his satisfaction and he was to leave London for the Isle of Man on thursday. He will not be gazetted for some little time but his whole business is ended and his pay commences. He expects to be sent to Stirling in the first instance where part of his regiment is quarterd. He writes in very good spirits.

I would have calld but I have a headache the consequence of yesterdays Gala. Ever your dutiful & affectionate son

W. S.

CASTLE STREET, *Saturday*

[*Law*]

TO GEORGE THOMSON

[Nov. 1811]

DEAR SIR,—I had forgot the *Evanche* of Glencoe in town (thinking indeed I had sent it to you) so could not answer your kind letter. I have almost finished the Irish song in the 12 foot verses. If you like Glencoe generally I² dare [say] I can make it better in correction. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

[*British Museum*]

¹ “My Bond is to be signed to-day and I set off for the Island by the Mail of to-morrow Evening if I can get a place.”—*Letter of 27th November 1811 from Thomas Scott in London.*

² Early in November Scott sends *Glencoe*, remarking that if Thomson likes it generally he can probably improve it in correction. It may be as well to quote what Thomson says: “. . . I have read *Glencoe* with which I am perfectly delighted. It is a most admirable composition, and will do you immortal honour, etc.” He goes on to suggest improvements.

TO ALEXANDER MUNDELL ¹

MY DEAR SIR,—I had a letter a fortnight since from Monypenny telling me the report of the Crown council on Mr. Home's pension was on the anvil and would be immediately sent up to London. I think it probable (although some delay has arisen from the misquotation of an Act of parliament in the reference from the Treasury) that the opinion of Lord Advocate and Solicitor may by this time be in London. And although I can have no certainty of this till I go to Edinr. being unwilling to press upon their secret councils yet I think it is right to apprise you of my expectations that you may make the necessary enquiries at the office and if the report be favourable of which I have good hopes from the intimation of the Solicitor I had you will press the matter through as speedily as possible and acquaint me with its progress. Of course the expence will devolve on me not on Mr. Home. Believe me Dear Sir Yours very truly WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 4 *Novemr.* 1811

Direct to me Castle Street Edinr. where I shall be on the 11th.

[*Owen D. Young*]

TO CHARLES ERSKINE

MY DEAR ERSKINE,—I have been prevented visiting you by the stormy weather. Be so good [as] to send me your account for Wauchope's Interest, my nephew's bond, etc., that I may settle it by a remittance. Pray let me know how poor Peter's affairs stand, and if so poor a friend as I am can do anything to serve to show our regard for the memory of a man I respected so much. I have been so much hazed about Dunlop that I have against my own judgment consented to reprove him—so you may do it the first court day ; but under the special

¹ Scott's London solicitor in Fludyer Street. See vol. i. p. 273 and the present volume, p. 133.

injunction that the next fault he commits (be it less or more) he shall be dismissed and punished to boot, as I dare say will come to pass. The poor Devil is, I understand, nearly starving, so really I have put a fever on my conscience in favour of my compassion.

The flood-dyke at Abbotsford has held out bravely against the late storms. I hope you are to go on clearing the aisle to the east of Melrose Abbey. In the Christmas vacation I shall claim a goose from you to be eaten in the Commendator's house for Harden will be off by that time, and I must be at Ashestiel to see how things go on at Abbotsford, and shall long for a warmer house than my own. Ever yours,

W. SCOTT.

ASHESTIEL, 9 *Novr.* 1811.

[*Stirton's Leaves*, 1929]

TO LORD MELVILLE

MY DEAR LORD,—This post carries up the opinion of our Crown lawyers upon Mr. Homes resignation which I understand to be favourable to his receiving the Superannuation & which I hope will close that (to me most important) matter. The report has been delayed by a mistake in the Treasury remit which referred among others to an Act of parliament for the Relief of insolvent debtors. I told the Advocate that Act might be much more to the purpose than he was aware of. As this delay has been occasioned by the mistake above mentioned perhaps the Treasury will give me the advantage of the October quarter which would be rather convenient as I have just now to fit out my poor brother Tom who is appointed paymaster to General Ross's regiment which will cost me £300. But your Lordship may believe I will be too happy to have my pay commence in any way & at any time the Board think most reasonable. Pray have

the goodness to destroy my Resignation. Mundell seems to surmize that a new commission may be judged necessary but this was proposed by Mr. Percival & rejected by our venerated & departed friend. I should deprecate it on two accounts first as giving unnecessary publicity to a transaction which although I trust is justifiable on sound grounds of law & equity might yet be caught at as a subject among others of invidious misrepresentation and secondly because the acceptance of a new commission might be construed to shake my interest in the indemnifications granted to the Clerks of Session under the old system which I acquired right to by long service under the old regime. I hope therefore as Mr. Homes resignation leaves me in quiet possession as his death would have done that no new commission will be thought necessary. There is a third reason—which I once hinted at and which your Lordship agreed might be worthy of consideration which is that I am *not* very popular at Carleton House—So *tota re perspecta* a new Commission would be in every degree perilous and troublesome.

I trust your Lordship will not think me the less sensible of your persevering & active friendship that I do not endeavour to express my thanks at great length. We have not known each other so long without your Lordship giving me credit for feeling as I ought upon such an occasion and without my being sensible that your Lordship is apt to think thanks more troublesome than requests—But I have to express my gratitude to your Lordship for a most valuable proof of your friendship & esteem in a proof-print of the late Lord Mellville so like that it made me melancholy for the whole day after looking at it. It is a capital print and does honour to the artist who has caught more happily than I thought possible the spirit & expression of the countenance and even the very remarkable brilliant & piercing glance of the eye which in the regretted original had more of command and penetration than I ever saw in another countenance.

The Presidt. opend the Court¹ with a capital speech which affected all present as it evidently did the speaker himself. The new appointments seem generally approved of. Believe me my dear Lord Your truly obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 17 *November* [1811]

[*Nat. Lib. Scot.*]

TO ELIZABETH, MARCHIONESS OF STAFFORD

I HAVE the honor with many and respectful thanks to acknowledge the safe arrival of the future oaks with which Lady Stafford's goodness has gratified her unworthy friend. They are going today to Abbotsford, but I fear I must commit them to the lap of earth without the previous precaution of a nursery, as the place is but partially in my possession, and I have not had time to build a wall or otherwise secure a piece of ground against hares, rabbits and vermin. The ground, however, where I am about to put them has been lately repeatedly plowd, so there can be but few mice at present there, and I hope the royal ceremony of anointing, which shall not be neglected, may serve to secure the future monarchs of the forest from injury during their infancy. It must be confessd imagination is a lively prophet, since, though the growth of an oak is so disproportiond to our poor three-score and ten years, it can yet rear a grove of them out of a sack of acorns. But as we dandle future soldiers, judges and prelates in our little mewling children, we must use the same pleasing arts of anticipation in the forest nursery which we do in our own. I could say many very pretty things on this paralell, but as I am not absolutely certain

¹ Blair was succeeded by Charles Hope of Granton, in the county of Edinburgh, on the 10th of October 1811. He took his seat on the 12th November, when he delivered a warm eulogium of his predecessor.

that your ladyship would take the trouble to read them, I will e'en drop it before I have hunted it down.

Lord Gower is, I presume, by this time returned from Wales, which is, as I understand, a kind of Scotland, but without its inhospitable sterility, and presenting many more splendid remains of feudal antiquity. The people, however, seem to want the steady and shrewd perseverance which distinguishes our countrymen, who, I think, are more apt to exercise a sort of prospective prudence than their brethren of the south. Much of their success may be traced to this cause, which naturally produces the cautious value for character by which they are usually guided. I have very little doubt that your ladyship's patriotic attempts to combine industry with such reliques of ancient manners, as still dignify the highlanders who have the good fortune to be under your protection, will succeed, though perhaps not with the rapidity that your philanthropy may anticipate. It has taken a generation to convert a race of feudal warriors (for such were highlanders previous to 1745) into a quiet and peaceable peasantry, and perhaps it may take as long to introduce the spirit of action and persevering exertion necessary to animate them in their new profession. Man in general is a vile prejudiced animal, and although I think Scotchmen more open to conviction (when she appears with self interest in her hand) than most other folks, yet even with them pride and passion will sometimes turn both visitors out of doors. In the mean time a new race is gradually arising who will be trained to those sentiments and habits which the present state of society requires, and which it is your ladyships wish to introduce, and who will, in the course of twenty years, look back with wonder at the prejudices of their fathers, and with gratitude to their mistress who pursued their welfare in spite of themselves.

I have been looking into the story of the Duchess of Malphi. My edition of *Bandello* is the *first* in three volumes, 4to., Lucca 1553, with a supplement in 8vo.

printed at Lions, 1573. It contains the prefaces to the tales, omitted I believe, in all subsequent editions excepting that of London, 1750, or thereabouts. In the preface to that in question the author talks of the tragedy on which he founded his novel as a very recent and well known fact, so I suppose there can be little doubt of it. If the marquis's library has not the 1st edition I will copy out the preface for your ladyships satisfaction on this tragic subject.

Mrs. Scott joins in most respectful compliments, and I am ever Lady Staffords much obliged and most respectful humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH, 19 November 1811.

Colin M'Kenzie looks better this winter than I have seen him for many years.

[*The Sutherland Book*]

TO GEORGE THOMSON

[28th Nov. 1811]

DEAR SIR,—I send you the *prima cura*¹ of the Irish song, reserving corrections till I know how you like it and how it suits the music. I am apt to write eleven instead of twelve syllables in this measure, which does well enough for metrical rhythm, but not for musical. The foot can easily be supplied where omitted.

I am very glad you like "Glencoe." I have retained no copy of either, nor indeed did I ever write any foul copy, so that I cannot be teased with requests for copies, which it is often unpleasant to grant and churlish to refuse. Yours Dear Sir truly

W. S.

[*British Museum*]

¹ "Thomson writes at once to say that he likes the Irish song extremely: 'Every line breathes the delightful enthusiasm of joys that are past in the happiest manner.' The song in question is 'The return to Ulster,' which Thomson printed as the first song in his Irish collection."—JAMES CUTHBERT HADDEN, *George Thomson*, etc., p. 164.

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO

EDINBURGH, 1st Dec. 1811

DEAR SIR,—I received yours, when I was in the very bustle of leaving Ashestiel, which has been my summer residence (and a very sweet one) for these eight years past.¹ It was not, however, for a distant migration, as I was only removing to a small property of my own about five miles lower down the Tweed. Now, although, with true masculine indifference, I leave to my better half the care of furniture and china, yet there are such things as books and papers, not to mention broad-swords and targets, battle-axes and helmets, guns, pistols, and dirks, the care of which devolved upon me, besides the bustle of ten thousand directions, to be given in one breath of time, concerning ten thousand queries, carefully reserved for that parting moment, by those who might as well have made them six months before. Besides, I really wished to be here, and consult with my friends and publishers, the Messrs. Ballantynes, before answering the most material part of your letter. They will esteem themselves happy and proud to publish any thing of yours, and to preserve the strictest incognito so long as you think necessary. They only hesitate upon the scruple of its not being an original work, but a continuation of one already before the public ; one or two attempts of the same kind having already been made unsuccessfully. I told them I thought the title-page might be so moulded, as not to express the poem to be a continuation of Beattie's work, and that the explanation might be reserved for the preface or introduction. As this was an experiment, they proposed the terms should be those of sharing profits with the author—they being at the expense of print and paper. I can answer for their dealing honourably and justly, having already had occasion to know their mode of conducting business thoroughly well.

¹ Seven years past. See letter to Ellis, vol. i. pp. 224-5

With respect to the work itself, I believe Beattie says, in some of his letters, that he did intend the Minstrel to play the part of Tyrtæus in some invasion of his country. But I conceive one reason of his deserting the task he had so beautifully commenced, was the persuasion that he had given his hero an education and tone of feeling inconsistent with the plan he had laid down for his subsequent exploits ; and I entirely agree with you, that your termination of Edwin's history will be much more natural and pleasing than that intended by the author himself.

The MS. may be sent under cover to Mr. Croker or to Mr. Freeling. I will have the utmost pleasure in attending to its progress through the press, and doing all in my power to give it celebrity. I was under the necessity of making the Ballantynes my confidants as to the name of the author, for they would not listen to any proposal from an unknown Scottish bard, as such effusions have not of late been very fortunate. I flatter myself you will not think less of the caution, when I assure you your name smoothed all difficulties, as they are both readers of poetry, and no strangers to the "Local Attachment."

Believe me, dear Sir, I esteem myself honoured in the confidence you repose in me ; and that I am very much your faithful servant

WALTER SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, 1832]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR SHARPE,—Though I am very cross with you for not coming to Edinburgh, I hasten to thank you for your kind communications to my favourite "Register," and to requite you by a response to your two queries. Listen, then, to the Brazen Head.

I have the "Perplexed Prince."¹ It is a small 12mo, printed for R. Allan, London, without printer's name or

¹ *The Perplex'd Prince (History of the Duke of Monmouth under a feigned name)*. London. 12mo. *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 26.

date of publication, dedicated to Lord Russell—though, as the author acknowledges, without permission or acquaintance to justify the inscription. It is a stupid, bold attempt to throw the history of Charles's amour with Lucy Waters (Dame *Lucilious*, as the pamphleteer calls her) into a novel. Nothing like private history or even delectable scandal can be gleaned out of it except that Charles made his first addresses at the Court of *Denesia*, in a garden where the lady was plucking (not a rose, but) a carnation. It avers stoutly that the king, by the advice of his brother (who had his own ambitious ends to serve), married Madam Lucilious, very probably without any other witness than the said brother and the priest. The book itself shall attend you if you will point out a safe *quomodo* ; for I think it rather curious, though main stupid. I have also the "Fugitive Statesman" in requital for the "Perplexed Prince"—a sort of Tory Rowland for the Whig Oliver, which turns on the expatriation of Shaftesbury. Moreover, I possess a Grub Street of the same size and period, "The Life and Heroic Action of James Duke of Monmouth," which really contains some articles of minute information concerning that unfortunate tool of a Protestant Duke. Now if these can assist or entertain you, you shall have them for any length of time you please, provide you will engage not to revive the legend of the "Black Box," or to prove his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry lawful heir to these realms. It would grieve me to the heart to lose the privilege of Lady Dalkeith's squire and minstrel, and of cuddling her little boys. I do not think the matter would be softened by the promotion of my little namesake to be Prince Walter of Wales, or the prospect of being hanged for Border fealty to my chief, which our rigid laws might term high treason—in which case, as Shakespeare's clown says, I should have brought up a neck to a fair end. So e'en let the House of Hanover keep what they have got.

As to your second query, Mr. Irving, a second son of the Drum family, and an artist by profession, produced in the Exhibition at Edinburgh this year a view of the graves of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray in the dell of Lednoch, and added the fragment of the ballad to the description in the catalogue. I asked him about it, and he assured me of its authenticity, but said he could recover no more of it. It is evident the first verse of Allan Ramsay's song belonged to the old ballad, for the " bower theeked with rushes " has no connection with the stuff he has subjoined to it about Jove and Pallas. You will find the story of the unfortunate damsels (though I daresay you have heard it often) in the Statistical Account. I have no doubt the concluding lines are genuine. On looking at last spring catalogue, I do not find the lines ; they must have been in that for 1810. I think it was *Lednoch* Haugh, not *Stronach*, as you write.

Poor Graham is indeed one good man lost to the best of possible worlds. Indeed he had conscience and modesty enough for a whole General Assembly or Convocation. Yet his principles and prejudices and feelings made an odd jumble. He was an admirer of Queen Mary, and somewhat a Jacobite, yet a keen Whig in modern politicks ; a Church of England clergyman from choice and conviction, yet an advocate for Dissenters and Cameronians ; a Graham, and yet a murmurer against Montrose and Dundee. As for your amicable debate, there was nothing that I remember to regret about it, especially as I am convinced poor Graham was quite delighted with you. I daresay when he went to Arthur's bosom he was surprized, at tuning his lute to be attended with a grand trumpet accompaniment from the noble leaders of his name, to whom in his earthly blindness he had assigned another mansion. Adieu, my dear Sharpe.—Yours ever,

W. S.

EDINBURGH, 4 Dec. [1811]

Pray what is become of the family History ? I have got

a droll one of the Somervilles written about 1667, which I think of publishing.

I have filled up my sheet without a word of my Patagonian baby, Lady Hood, whom I like very much for all your raillery, or of Miss Seward. As for the scandal between the latter and the Vicar Saville, she herself told a female friend, who told me, there was not a word of truth in it,—and I believe her ; for she added candidly, she did not know what might have happened if Saville had not been more afraid of the devil than she was !

[*Sharpe's Letters*]

TO ROBERT SURTEES

MY DEAR SURTEES,—Your query about the old ballad reminds me what an idle correspondent I have been with a friend to whom I owe so much. I have not either a right or inclination to object to what Mr. Bell,¹ of Newcastle, proposes. An old ballad is, I apprehend, common property, and cannot be appropriated exclusively even by the person who first brings it before the public ; and at any rate, if I had any right in the matter, it could be only through you to whom I owe the song, with many other favours. In about a fortnight I shall send the seventh volume of Somers, which I hope will reach you safe. I shall add a flimsy sort of pamphlet, published (or printed, I should say, for it is not *published*) by a lady of your country, now residing here. It is a genealogical memoir of the family of Ogle ; but far too general, and too little supported by dates and references, to be interesting. It might be called from the name of the fair—‘Prideaux’s Connections.’ I hope, likewise, to add a

¹ “ Mr. John Bell, a bookseller on the Quay-side in Newcastle, the publisher of a . . . little volume entitled *Rhymes of Northern Bards*, 12mo, 1812. The song alluded to is probably one of the many which he reprinted from Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.”—Note to *Surtees Memoir*.

Caledonian friends professionally this season. We have got a clever little theatre neat clean and well-appointed ; quite a different thing from what it was when you were butchered there by the most butcherly Othello I ever saw. Our best support is Daniel Terry an accomplished man and an excellent actor ; his old men in Comedy particularly are the finest I ever saw. He is a great reader and a particular friend of mine.

I have no news to send you except that I am leaving Ashestiel for a neighbouring farm about three miles above Melrose which being my own property I am desirous of settling there for life. It is not at present near so beautiful as Ashestiel being very bare but as it commands a fine reach of the Tweed I think it has as the phrase is, great capabilities.

A friend of mine is very anxious to have the music of the boat-song as performed at Covent Garden—Roderick Dhu's song I mean— If your influence is adequate to procure me one it will come free to me if addressed under cover to Francis Freling Esqr, General Post Office who will forward it. Mrs. Scott desires me to add her compliments and congratulations on so flattering and desirable an engagement and I am ever very truly Dear Miss Smith Your faithfully humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 12 *December*, 1811.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO HENRY WEBER ¹

[1811]

DEAR SIR,—I have been looking over your *Ford* ¹ which I think sets you up as an admirable dramatic editor. The

¹ The first few lines of this letter are in Scott's autograph—so far as "superstition." The remainder is in the hand of an amanuensis. The book referred to is Ford's (John) *Dramatic Works* ; with an introduction and notes, by Henry Weber, 2 vols., 8vo. L.P. Edin. 1811 (*Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 209).

notes are very good both as illustrations of the author and the age. I made one or two trifling glossarial remarks.

Forspeak in the *Witch of Edmonton* is a common Scotch word & superstition and applies to any extravagant commendation of a good property in a child or animal as of its temper health &c. which is supposed to be peculiarly unlucky & to augur a speedy change in the very circumstance which is the subject of such presumptuous confidence. To obviate the risque of *forspeaking* the gossips usually add some little ejaculation expressive of deference to heaven or to fortune, as "It's a well natured bairn God bless it"—or "a braw cow Luck sain her!" I have heard and seen it used in a general sense as it seems to be employd by Ford.

In a passage about a King's beard changing i/t/s colour you read *mowd* for *mewd*. But the lart which is the old is also the true reading. A bird especially a hawk is said to mue her feathers when she sheds them in the season.

To *surfel* cheeks, seems to me an error of the press for *purfel* which signifies the *puff out* or *plump out*.

I return you many thanks for my elegant copy. I am going out of town today but I hope to return on Sunday night at least on Monday to breakfast when I shall hope for the pleasure of meeting you. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

EDIN. *Saturday*.

[*Symington*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

N.D. [1811¹]

[Note in Joanna Baillie's hand: *A part of a letter (the other part has been lost)*]

. . . NEVER sit with wet feet, why I dont see I need

¹The original is marked in a late hand "1808." See also Scott's date at end without year.

despair that by the aid of spectacles of the highest number I may see my forests. I have got a beautiful design for my cottage from Stark of Glasgow¹ a young man of exquisite taste and who must rise very high in his profession if the bad health under which he suffers does not keep him down or cut him short. He has most gentleman-like and amiable manners and his whole appearance indicates genius—but not less clearly that it will be but shortlived. I was greatly concernd for him the few days he spent at Ashestiel with me. I do not intend to proceed upon this great adventure for a while as yet. The little farmhouse has five tolerable rooms in it kitchen included and if all come to all we can adopt your suggestion and make a bed in the barn. So you see I keep the lee-side of prudence in my proceedings.

While I was watching my infant or rather embryo oaks you have been wandering under the shade of those celebrated by Pope and Denham or in a still earlier age by Surrey and Chaucer. How often have you visited the site of Hearn's oak and call'd up the imaginary train of personages who fill the stage around it in representation? And was I obliged to your kindness or to that of George Ellis for a bag of acorns from Windsor forest which reached me a few days ago? I wish you had found each other out. He is one of the most amiable and ente[r]taining men in the world, and his wife a good-humoured and lively woman. Their residence is at Sunning Hill probably not very distant from yours. I conclude Dr. Baillie is now released from his melancholy and hopeless attendance on the poor old King. We are here alarm'd and stund with unauthenticated rumours concerning the state of the Prince Regent's health. God forbid any of them be founded in truth.

Pray let me know how Dr. and Mrs. Baillie do. Mrs. Scott joins in kindest remembrance to them and to Miss Agnes Baillie. I am impatient to know when we

¹ See note later, p. 65.

are to expect the volume. Ever my dear friend affectionately and respectfully yours

W SCOTT

EDINR 12 *December*

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

MY DEAR FRIEND,—. . . It is saying too little to say I am enchanted with the said third volume especially with the two first plays which in every point not only sustain but even exalt your reputation as a dramatist. The whole character of Orra is exquisitely supported as well as imagined and the language distinguished by a rich variety of fancy which I know no instance of excepting in Shakspeare. After I had read Orra twice to myself Terry read it over to us a third time aloud and I have seldom seen a little circle so much affected as during the whole fifth act. I think it would act charmingly omitting perhaps the baying of the hounds which could not be happily imitated, and retaining only the blast of the horn and the halloo of the huntsmen at a distance. Only I doubt if we have now an actress that could carry through the mad scene in the fifth act which is certainly one of the most sublime that ever was written. Yet I have a great quarrel with this beautiful drama for you must know you have utterly destroyed a song of mine precisely in the turn of your outlaws ditty and sung by persons in somewhat the same situation. I took out my unfortunate Manuscript to look at it but alas it was the encounter of the iron and the earthen pitchers in the fables. I was clearly sunk, and the potsherds not worth gathering up. But only conceive that the chorus should have run thus verbatim—

Tis mirk midnight with peaceful men,
With us 'tis dawn of day

And again

Then boot and saddle, comrades boon,
Nor wait the dawn of day.

I think the Dream extremely powerful indeed but I am rather glad we did not hazard the representation for the reasons mentioned in my last. It rests so entirely on Osterloo that I am almost sure we must have made a bad piece of work of it. By-the-by a story is told of an Italian buffoon who had contrived to give his Master a petty prince of Italy a good hearty ducking and a fright to boot to cure him of an ague. The treatment succeeded but the potentate by way of retaliation had his audacious physician tried for treason and condemned to lose his head. The criminal was brought forth, the priest heard his confession and the poor jester knelt down to the block. Instead of wielding his axe the executioner as he had been instructed threw a pitcher of water on the bare neck of the criminal. There the jest was ended (*sic*) to have terminated but poor Gonnella¹ was found dead on the spot. I believe the catastrophe is very possible.

The latter half of the volume I have not perused with the same attention, though I have devoured both the comedy and the Beacon in a hasty manner. I think the approbation of the public will make you alter your intention of taking upon [*sic*] the knitting-needle and that I shall be as much to seek for my purse as for the bank-notes which you say are to stuff it though I have no idea where they are to come from. But I shall think more of the purse than the notes come where or how they may.

To return I really think *Fear* the most dramatic passion you have hitherto touchd because capable of being

¹ A similar story is a tradition in Aberdeen and has given a name by which students are known to children in the street—"Hey, Willie Collie." The porter of this name at some period was very unpopular with the resident students of King's College and was treated in this manner, with the same result.

drawn to the most extreme paroxysm upon the stage. In Orra you have all gradations from a timidity excited by a strong and irritable imagination to the extremity which altogether unhinges the understanding. The most dreadful fright I ever had in my life (being neither constitutionally timid or in the way of being exposed to real danger) was in returning from Hampstead the day which I spent so pleasantly with you. Although the evening was nearly closed I foolishly chose to take the short cut through the fields and in that enclosure where the path leads close by a high and thick hedge—with several gaps in it however—did I meet one of your very thorough-paced London ruffians at least judging from the squalid and jail-bird appearance and blackguard expression of countenance. Like the man that met the Devil, I had nothing to say to him if he had nothing to say to me but I could not help looking back to watch the movements of such a suspicious figure and to my great uneasiness saw him creep through the hedge on my left hand. I instantly went to the first gap to watch his motions and saw him stooping as I thought either to lift a bundle or to speak to some person who seemed lying in the ditch. Immediately after, he came cowering back up the opposite side of the hedge as returning towards me under cover of it. I saw no weapons he had except a stick but as I moved on to gain the stile which was to let me into the free field with the idea of a wretch springing upon me from the cover at every step I took I assure you I would not wish the worst enemy I ever had to undergo such a feeling as I had for about five minutes. My fancy made him of that description which usually combines murder with plunder and though I was well armed with a stout stick and a very formidable knife which when opened becomes a sort of *Skene-dhu* or dagger I confess my sensations though those of a man much resolved not to die like a sheep were vilely short of heroism. So much so that when I jumped over the stile

a shiver of the wood ran a third of an inch between my nail and flesh without my feeling the pain or being sensible such a thing had happened. However, I saw my man no more and it is astonishing how my spirits rose when I got into the open field and when I reached the top of the little mount and all the bells in London (for aught I know) began to jangle at once I thought I had never heard anything so delightful in my life so rapid are the alternations of our feelings. This foolish story where perhaps I had no rational ground for the horrible feeling which possessed my mind for a little while came irresistibly to my pen when writing to you on the subject of terror.

How came you to think Lord Craig was President. I presume it was because he officiated as such during our interregnum. I grieve truly to say his health is very indifferent and rendered even the temporary charge very burdensome to him. Somewhat of a paralytic affection has seized one side so that he can hardly stir even by the assistance of a servant ; his mind is however perfectly entire but his spirits as you will readily believe very low indeed. He is a kind hearted amiable man and I am sure I shall grieve you by this account of his health.

Poor Grahame¹ gentle and amiable and enthusiastic deserves all you can say of him. His was really a hallowed harp as he was himself an Israelite without guile. How often have I teased him but never out of his good-humour by praising Dundee and laughing at the Covenanters ! But I beg your pardon you are a Westland Whig too and will perhaps make less allowance for a descendant of the persecutors. I think his works should be collected and published for the benefit of his family. Surely the wife and orphans of such a man have a claim on the generosity of the public.

Pray make my remembrance to the lady who so kindly

¹ Died 14th September 1811.

remembers our early intimacy.¹ I do perfectly remember being an exceedingly spoilt, chattering monkey whom indifferent health and the cares of a kind grandmamma and aunt, had made I suspect extremely abominable to everybody who had not a great deal of sympathy and good-nature which I daresay was the case of my *quondam* bedfellow since she recollects me so favourably. I am much obliged to you for the verses of our good friend Mr. Coxe: remember me most kindly to him and acknowledge my part of the obligation in the manner that you think will give him most pleasure.

I must break off as I have a very important matter to settle—no less than to close a treaty for the gun and arms of old Rob Roy.

Mrs. Scott sends kindest remembrances to Mrs. Baillie Dr. Baillie and particularly to Miss Agnes in which I sincerely join. Farewell and believe [me] faithfully and respectfully your sincere friend

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN 17 Decr 1811

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I received your kind letter a week or two ago. The little interlude of the Bantling at Rokeby reminds me of a Lady whose mother happen'd to produce her upon very short notice between the hands of a game at whist and who from a joke of the celebrated David Hume who was one of the players lived long distinguish'd by the name of The Parenthesis. My wife had once nearly made a similar blunder in very awkward circumstances. We were invited to dine at Mellville Castle (to which we were then near neighbours) to dine with the Chief Baron² and his Lady then its temporary inhabitants

¹ See note to letter of 17th January 1812 to Joanna Baillie, p. 62.

² Robert Dundas of Arniston (1758-1829), Solicitor-General for Scotland, 1784; Lord Advocate, 1789; M.P. for Midlothian, 1790-96; Chief

when behold the Obadiah whom I despatchd two hours before dinner from our cottage to summon the Dr. Slop of Edinburgh halting at Mellville Lodge to rest his wearied horse make apologies and so forth encounterd the Mellville Castle Obadiah sallying on the identical errand for the identical man of skill who like an active Knight Errant relieved the two distressd dames within three hours of each other. A blessed duet they would have made if they had put off their crying out as it is calld till they could do it in concert.

And now I have a grand project to tell you of. Nothing less than a fourth romance in verse, the theme during the English civil wars of Charles I. and the scene your own domain of Rokeby. I want to build my cottage a little better than my limited finances will permitt out of my ordinary income and although it is very true that an author should not hazard his reputation yet as Bob Acres says I really think reputation should take some care of the gentleman in return. Now I have all your scenery deeply imprinted in my memory and moreover be it known to you I intend to refresh its traces this ensuing summer and to go as far as the borders of Lancashire and the caves of Yorkshire and so perhaps on to Derbyshire. I have sketchd a story which pleases me and I am only anxious to keep my theme quiet for its being piddled upon by some of your Ready to Catch literati as John Bunyan calls them would be a serious misfortune to me. I am not without hope of seducing you to be my guide a little way on my tour. Is there not some book (sense or nonsense I care not) on the beauties of Teesdale—I mean a descriptive work—if you can point it out or lend it me you will do me a great favour and no less if you can tell me any traditions of the period. By which party was Barnard Castle occupied?

Baron of the Exchequer in Scotland. He married his second cousin, Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville, the great Scottish statesman, who died this year.

It strikes me that it should be held for the parliamt. Pray help me in this by truth or fiction or tradition. I care not which if it be picturesque. What the deuce is the name of that wild glen where we had such a clamber on horseback up a stone staircase?—Cats-cradle or Cats castle I think it was. I wish also to have the true edition of the traditionary tragedy of your old house at Moreham¹ and the ghost thereunto appertaining and you will do me yeomans service in compiling the reliques of so valuable a legend. Item—Do you know anything of a striking ancient castle belonging I think to the Duke of Leeds calld Coningburgh Castle. Grose notices it but in a very flimsy manner. I once flew past it in the mail-coach when its round tower and flying buttresses had a most romantic effect in the morning dawn.

The Quarterly is beyond my praise and as much beyond my [*word dropped*] as I was beyond that of my poor old nurse who died the other day. Sir John Sinclair has gotten the golden fleece at last. Dogberry would not desire a richer reward for having been written down an ass. £6000^a a year? good faith the whole reviews in Britain should rail at me with my free consent better cheap by at least a cypher.² There is no chance with all my engagements to be at London this spring. My little boy Walter is ill with the meazles and I expect the rest to catch the disorder which appears thank God very mild. Mrs. Scott joins in kindest Compliments to Mrs. Morritt and believe me truly yours

W. SCOTT

EDINR. 20 Decr. & a merry Xmas to you [1811]

[*Law*]

¹ Scott means Mortham Tower, a Border peel dating from the fifteenth century (now a farmhouse), close to Rokeby Park.

² "Shortly after the appearance of the article alluded to Sir John Sinclair was appointed cashier of Excise for Scotland . . . the emoluments of the situation were greatly reduced at the death of his predecessor, Sir James Grant."—Lockhart's note.

TO DR. CLARKE WHITFIELD

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter this morning and I will not fail on my return to Edinr. which will be about the middle of this week to make such enquiries respecting the musical professorship as may enable me to answer your letter on the subject with precision. I never heard of such a bequest which is rather singular if the thing exists. We are apt to suffer every thing of the kind to glide into that quiet snug mode of management called *jobbing* ; and at any rate if you are successful in your wishes you will owe it more to your own high reputation than to any influence as to which your ideas are more flattering to me than promising for yourself. You may however rely on my best exertions in forwarding your wishes should the object be real and attainable. But I could swear the Lady of 65 (if she has no nearer kinsman) has at least a seventh cousin of sixteen learning to scrape guts upon the fiddle to qualify him for the professorship on her demise ; and this upon the true natural principle of *keeping our own fishguts for our own sea maws*.

I am glad you met Lord Clarendon who is my good and honourable friend. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to hear Miss Clarke sing and I am sure she cannot make a request that I would not be happy to comply with. It is very possible I may in the course of a month or two have some verses that may be adapted for music and if you will observe the strictest honour in not showing them to anyone (as they will make part of an embryo publication) I could easily put them into your hands so as to give you a long start of any other composer. There is one of them a sort of ballad, the burden being

The midsummer dew makes maidens fair

that I think you will like as a subject. There are some exquisite songs in Miss Baillie's 3d volume of plays on

the passions now just coming out. An outlaw's song in particular is one of the wildest and most fanciful things I remember. I hope you will set it—something of a wild bugle horn note in the last line but one would have a fine effect—it is repeated in every stanza.

The chough & crow to roost are gone
 The owl hoots from the tree
 The hushed wind makes a feeble moan
 Like infant charity
 The wild-fire dances on the fen
 The red star shoots her ray
 Uprouse ye then my merry men
 It is our dawning day &c.

I am interested in the success of your Edinr. project as I should be delighted to have you among us. You will hear from me soon on the subject & if you will desire your friend to call on me perhaps he may shorten my enquiries a little. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 22 Dec. 1811

[*Milligan*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE ¹

MY DEAR SIR,—It would be difficult for me to find words to thank you for all your favours and perhaps you will suppose this the more likely as I have been some time in seeking for them. But my little Walter has had the

¹ Hartstonge had written a long letter on the 27th November announcing his return and the dispatch of acorns. He encloses a letter from Mr. Thos. Steele and announces that a box of "original writings of Swift" is not small but large. Steele's work will soon be in Dublin, and his leave to forward the box will be obtained. The Countess of Llandaff is to send a form. He has through his aunt got into touch with Major Tickell, who has curious letters. Going to present his letters he found the young Mr. Tickell had them, who has seen them with others from Pope, etc. He describes several. He has further heard of seven letters belonging to a Mr. McCausland, brother-in-law to General Plunkett—business letters. On the 9th December he announces Tickell has put the letters in his hands to copy. On the 12th December he encloses copies of fourteen letters.

meazles very smartly which is as I hope you will one day experience in a Nursery of your own a legitimate excuse for a papa's slackening in correspondence. The *Carta de Sevesta* arrived safe and the acorns are most beautiful tomorrow if the weather continues open I intend to plant them with my own hands upon a knoll to which they shall give a name. I have just got out here for a day or two, on seeing Walter in a fair way of recovery ; but my stay will be very short as I suppose the disease will run through all my little family. While you have been providing for my future oaks I have been endeavouring to trim your Laurels. I have made some alterations and in one or two cases some omissions in the poems now under Ballantynes charge. I am sensible how delicate a matter it is to correct the works of another author but I am confident in your good nature and that you will give me credit in every case for having acted to the best of my judgement. The treasures you send me for Swift are quite invaluable. I have endeavoured to express my sense of Mr. Tickells liberality in a letter which I enclose for your care. I consider myself as much indebted to the generous confidence so universally reposed in me by the gentlemen of your country. The letters are very curious indeed and most important. They confirm the opinion I always had of the Deans politics that he was a High Churchman, but not a Tory in Secular politics altho he acted with those who were. I have a very polite letter from Mr. Steele which I have endeavoured to acknowledge in the enclosed in the handsomest terms I can. Mr. Burne has lost the letter we hunted after which he lets me know very civilly. Item while I am owning my obligations I must not forget Mr. McNally who has done a very kind thing in a very handsome manner. I hope you will be able to get a peep at Mr. MacCauslands letters altho the purport may be dry enough. Yet the Deans manner was so very characteristic that he seems seldom to have put pen to paper without leaving interesting traces of

his peculiar humour and talents. I have subjoined Wilsons affidavit (very curious and acceptable) to the account given by Faulkener of that strange scuffle. I must so far exculpate Lord Orrery that his letter seems rather an enquiry into the truth of the report of the assault upon the Dean than an assertion of it. The charge rests on the Evidence of Faulkner, but there seems something suspicious considering the Deans situation that Wilson should have carried him into the country in a hackny coach without any of his usual attendants. By the way his evidence shews that the Dean did actually keep a carriage which he is said to have set up on Walpoles dismissal from office. Before that he used to say he was the poorest gentleman in Ireland who eat upon plate, and the richest who did not keep a coach. Your curious Memoranda shew the amount and value of his Service of plate. I am impatient for the square Box. Mr. Freeling or Mr. Croker at the Admiralty will frank any reasonable packet. About the size of the acorns, to avoid troubling either too much or too often they may be divided between them. I have earnestly to request you will give your kind and persevering fingers a repose, so far as mere copying is necessary, any amanuensis whom you can trust shall be liberally remunerated and to set your conscience and feelings quite at ease, I will charge his labours to the accompt of the Bookseller. I am sure you take trouble enough on my account without the drudgery which such a person might save you. I have little to tell you except that Miss Baillies 3d Vol of the plays on the Passions is just published. The poetry of the first especially is of the very highest order and the songs quite enchanting. I have been ruining myself by the purchase of a small lot of ancient armour and other curiosities (Rob Roys gun among other things) the stock in trade of a Virtuoso who is leaving off collecting, they are very rare and handsome and I defy any one to say that there is a single article among the two hundred which can be

of use to a human being excepting indeed a snuff Box, and that is useless to me as I never take snuff. The people who are planting Abbotsford have rejoiced my heart by digging up a brazen utensil much resembling an ill made coffee pot but termed by the learned a sacrificial Vessel for pouring the wine on the brows of the victim. Was not this having great Luck? and does it not bode Corn Wine & Oil in plenty. Dr. Robertson the gentleman who accomplished the difficult business of intimating to Romana the revolution of Spain has sent me a letter by a Mr. Benvier or some such name.¹ I cannot recollect Dr. R. altho he writes as if we should be known to each other. Can you throw any light on this difficult question? I wish to shew every attention in my power to Strangers but as our society is rather narrow, I am obliged to keep my hospitality a little in curb unless to gentlemen I know particularly or who are particularly recommended. We have a pleasant specimen here of your Episcopacy, in the Bishop of Meath a well bred and well informed man who makes Edinburgh his residence for the winter months: he and his family have been frequently in Castle Street—he married a Scotch lady of the name of Moray, perhaps you may know him.

If you find this letter dull you must allow for my present lonely and disconsolate state being obliged to be here for a day or two quite alone as of course Mrs. Scott does not leave the children, we expect the disorder will be as mild as in Walters case for though he had a tremendous quantity of spots and swelling in proportion yet they went off very soon and yesterday he was able to quit his bed—ever yours truly

W. SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 22nd December 1811

¹ See Scott's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, Chapter IX, for the Spanish General Romana and his escape to the Spanish forces from the Isle of Fünen in the Baltic through the timely information of "a dexterous and daring agent, a Catholic priest of Scotch extraction, named Robertson."

Ps. My ancient friend and borderer poor John Leyden has closed his career at Batavia he went there with Lord Minto to assist in settling the Colony but threw himself with his natural ardour upon an Indian Library which had been shut up many years, he was seized with a shivering which never left him and died after an illness of three days. More Oriental learning has perished with him than has fallen to the lot of any individual to acquire Sir William Jones not excepted.

EDINBURGH 5th Jany. [1812]

This letter has been delayed by a sharp feverish complaint which held me for some days—since my return here, my eyes are much affected which prevents my sending the letters I purposed to enclose. They will be with you in about a week.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

[To GEORGE THOMSON]

[*Decr. 1811*]

DEAR SIR,—The inclosed are nearly as well as I can make them at present though I shall try to see the proofs. I am sincerely glad you like them. The difficulty with me in song writing is not to find verses but to get something that is rather new. I will call one morning to hear the melodies. Meanwhile I am much yours

W. S.

CASTLE STREET, *Monday eveng.*

[*British Museum*]

To THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUGH

[No date]

MY DEAR LORD DUKE,—I send you the Russian snuff-box which I had mislaid. The inscription is said to

intimate the effigies of Witgenstein of which your Grace can probably judge for the characters are heathen Greek to me or something worse. I have heard old Scotch men say that if you keep anything seven years you will find a use for it. Now among the useless distichs which my memory has swept together very involuntarily there is one which I think began a copy of verses addressd by the Comedians of the Edinr. theatre to Mrs. Siddons on her first coming here when they presented her with a silver snuff-box

“ ’Tis the box and not the dust
That shall please thee most, we trust ”

Now after keeping this couplet in my head thrice seven years at least I find it will be a genteel way of intimating to your Grace that though I have the pleasure to enrich your collection of snuff boxes with this addition you are not to expect any snuff to put into it upon my account. For lo ! what says my extract from Boswells life of Johnson Vol. 3d. p. 178—mine is the octavo but your Grace will find the passage in the 4 vol if that is your copy under the year 1779. It intimates that Beauclerk not Goldsmith had the dispute with Johnson on which our bet depends so there is no chance of your Grace getting a pound of snuff at my expence.

I am requested by Charlotte to say that we will do ourselves the honour with the two young people of attending her Grace upon January 5th . . . And I ever am My Lord Duke Your Graces truly obliged & faithful

WALTER SCOTT

CASTLE STREET *Tuesday* [29th Decr. 1811]

[*Buccleuch*]

TO LADY ABERCORN¹

MY DEAR FRIEND,—There was some learned man or other whose name I have forgot who invented a theory to account for all the petty misadventures unlucky chances & whimsical contrecemps of life by supposing a certain description of inferior dæmons not capable of any very great or extensive calamity such as earthquakes or revolutions or famines or volcanoes but who were just equal to oversetting tea urns breaking china carrying notes to wrong addresses & letting in unacceptable visitors & keeping out our friends whom we wished to see & organizing all the petite guerre which is so constantly waged against our Christian patience. It is owing, I fancy, to the intervention of a whole hive of these little diabolins that I have postponed from day to day acknowledging your kind remembrances in hopes every post that arrived would give me leave to begin by assuring you that my matter in which you so kindly interest yourself is concluded. Till to-day however from a train of the most petty & teasing little doubts difficulties miscarriages & misapprehensions the Treasury business has gone on like the attack & defence of a fortified place

¹ Lady Abercorn's letter, to which Scott here replies, was written on 22nd November 1811. She wishes "to know whether your business is likely soon to come to a termination. . . . I have had for a great length of time a sketch of a cottage by Mrs C. Long for you. . . . I am extremely glad you cut Lord Ho" and . . . whenever he does an unkind or an ungenerous thing it is by the influence of his wife. . . . I do not however know what mention he made of you in the House of Lords. . . . I told Miss Owenson what you desired and flattered her very much." She goes on to tell of Campbell's visit to the Priory: "He liked none of the men he found there (so I heard) and few of the women . . . I was told that he was extremely unpleasant after the Ladies left the room."—*Walpole Collection*. These are most of the points Scott refers to.

whose every approach is disputed in form & the *chamade* is not beat till the enemy is in possession of the glacis. At length however the *chamade* has been beaten, for I have a letter this morning from the solicitor of the Treasury acquainting me the business is finally arranged, the form adjusted & the warrants directed to be issued forth at a board of treasury to be held today. To you my dear friend who are among the few might think such a thing of consequence & who have been so kindly & indefatigably zealous in bringing the matter to this point it will not be indifferent to know that this makes my circumstances very easy & even affluent according to my ideas of expence & housekeeping. In fact as our former income afforded us all the comforts & some of the elegancies of life & as neither my wife nor I have the least wish to step beyond the decent & hospitable expence we have hitherto been able to maintain an addition which raises our income from £1500⁰⁰ to £2800⁰⁰ is in truth a little mine of wealth which prudently husbanded will prevent, if it please God to spare me a few years, the anxious feelings which a parent must entertain in my circumstances concerning those who are to succeed him. Indeed my library has been my only heavy expence & I think it is worth more than double the money it cost me. Will you my dear friend make my best thanks acceptable to Mr. Arbuthnot. I will not fail to express them myself but I am sure he will value them more as coming through your Ladyship.

O the beautiful cottage you sent me ! But there are practical objections affecting the extent & irregularity of roof which in our severe climate can scarcely by any labour be kept water-tight where there are many flanks I have borrowed several hints from it however & I will send you a plan & elevation of my intended cottage. I do not intend to begin it this next summer. There is a small farm-house on the place into which by dint of compression I think I can cram my family. This will

give me a year to prepare my accompaniments of wood walks & shrubbery & moreover to save a little money clear off old scores & encounter my lime & mortar engagements courageously. During our short holidays I was working at Abbotsford in the midst of snow courageously for three days together but I was recalled by my little people taking the measles—very favourably however. I am afraid if I permit you to chuse a page between my two boys you will desert the eldest for the youngest. Your original attendant is a boy of an excellent disposition sensible bold & at the same time remarkable gentle & sweet temperd but the little fellow if it please God to spare him will turn out something uncommon for he has a manner of thinking & expressing himself altogether original. You shall chuse however when you come to my cottage but I shall not be surprized if a fair lady prefers the striking to the reasonable, especially when both are amiable & good-temperd. They are all recovering as well as possible.

You ask about my business in the H. of Lords & my exceptions at Lord Holland. It was a very silly business devised I believe by Lord Lauderdale merely to injure my feelings by mentioning the misfortunes of my brother at a time & in a manner when it was impossible for me to have an opportunity of making any reply or defence. My situation of Clerk of Session embraced a good deal of patronage & it chanced shortly after Toms misfortunes that the death of an individual gave me an opportunity of exercising it. To the situation of the deceased worth £450_n a year I promoted an old & meritorious clerk in my office—To his situation about £300_n I raised a subordinate person with whom I was also satisfied. There remained undisposed of a sort of office capable of being exercized by Deputy which might vary in its emoluments according to the public favour in which the person stood who happened to hold. It was the post of one of eighteen officers of court called Extractors

whom the public were at liberty to chuse amongst for the discharge of certain duties. The business was so unequally divided amongst them that some made from £500, to £1000, a year others not £50 & one or two not a guinea. Although my brother had used me most grievously ill yet his wife & children were likely to be destitute & as his social qualities had given him many friends among the persons who have occasion to employ these extractors there was a general wish expressed to me that I should name my brother to the vacant place & such a share of employment promised as would make it worth while. I would have been a revengeful brute & incurd the deserved reprobation of everybody about the court if I had not given my brother however guilty this opportunity of availing himself of the assistance of the friends he had left. I mentioned that the office required no personal attendance & for the best reason in the world that it could not be called a monopoly for there were seventeen other persons to resort to for the discharge of it. I put a proper person in to my brothers office & he derived I believe about £200, or £250, from his share of business for two years when the office was with others abolished under what is called the judicature act with a provision of compensation by life-annuity for those holding them. My brothers compensation was ranked at £130, a year (greatly under his actual loss) & when the bill was brought in for carrying it through My Lord of Lauderdale took upon him to stand up & oppose my brother having any share in the compensations awarded for no other reason I could ever conjuncture than to have the pleasure of telling over his disasters as an oblique insult to me where I could not enjoy that of pulling his Lordships nose in return which would have been in some danger for such words uttered in any other place. The House being of opinion that the office was my gift which I might have bestowed on his Lordship or his footman if I pleased, that it had been regularly

conducted by my brother, that he was at least entitled to £130, for abolition of an office by which he made near double the sum passed over his objections with contempt. Now my Lord Holland knowing as little of the merits of the cause as it was possible chose likewise to take a part in this debate & that was what irritated me against him when he came here. I have been obliged to go at great length over this very stupid affair which however always makes my blood boil when I think of it. I could easily if I would have stooped to retaliate such an injury in the way it was given have taught Lord L. what it was to throw stones when he had glass windows in his own head : for his own family history has been long before the public a disgusting scene of domestic oppression tyranny faithlessness & hard heartedness. As to Lord Holland of whom I always had a very different opinion & who I think is (politics apart) a worthy & amiable man I was only desirous he should know the next time he had occasion to mention anyone's name in public he would expose himself to disagreeable feelings in private if he did not fix his charge upon secure grounds. The feeling was born with me not to brook a disparaging look from an emperour when I had the least means of requiting it in kind & I have only to hope it is combined with the anxious wish never to deserve one were it from a beggar.

I am not surprized that Tom Campbell disappointed your expectations in society. To a mind peculiarly irritable & galled I fear by the consciousness of narrow circumstances there is added a want of acquaintance with the usual intercourse of the world which like many other things can only be acquired at an early period of life. Besides I have always remarked that literary people think themselves obliged to take somewhat of a constrained & affected turn in conversation seeming to consider themselves as less a part of the company than something which the rest were come to see & wonder at. If your Ladyships friendship is not too partial in supposing

me less quizzical than my neighbours it is not owing to any good sense of my own but to the fortunate circumstances which connected me with good company & led me to feel myself at home in it long before I made any literary essays. Since my success I have always endeavoured to play my little part in society as quietly & good humouredly as I could. Here is an unmerciful long letter. It will be soon followed by my drawing etc which I will send by favour of Mr. Arbuthnot. Adieu my dear & kind friend I must have tired both your head & your eyes. Ever your truly obliged

W. SCOTT

EDINBURGH 1 *January* 1812

All the best wishes of the season attend your fire-side. Have you seen Miss Baillies last volume.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON, DRURY LANE THEATRE ¹

SIR,—I am favour'd with your letter, and am much obliged to you for the polite expression it contains, as well as for your supposing me capable of advancing in any degree the dramatic art or the advantage of its professors. As I am very fond of the Stage which is the only public amusement that I ever indulge in I have at times, from my own inclination, or at the solicitation of friends, partial like myself, to my other productions been

¹ Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), after many vicissitudes, made his début at Drury Lane in 1804. He remained a member of the company till 1809, returned to it in 1812-15, and again in 1819-26. "During the period last named he was lessee and manager of the theatre, from which in 1826 he retired ruined."—*D.N.B.* What he had proposed to Scott when writing on 31st December was: "I am anxious for an original subject to be prepared for my stage entirely by yourself. My reason is I think strong—your style is, if I mistake not, more dramatic than any other poet of the present day. . . . Who so fit to produce a most effective stage presentation?" He reminds Scott of their having met in Edinburgh, since when he has "become the proprietor of one of the London Summer Theatres."

tempted to consider the subject your letter proposes to me. But upon a mature consideration of my own powers such as they are, and of the probable consequences of any attempt to write for the theatre, which might fall short of complete success, I have come to the determination of declining every overture of the kind, of which I have received several.

I therefore have only to express my regret that it is not in my power to assist your exertions, which I have no doubt, the public favour, and your own talents, will render successful without such aid, and I am very glad I have been indirectly the means of supplying new subjects for your Theatre, and am very much, Sir, your obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINB. *January 6, 1812.*

[*Willis's Current Notes*]

TO ALEXANDER MUNDELL, BARRISTER-AT-LAW,
PARLIAMENT STREET, LONDON

MY DEAR SIR,—From your kind letter I perceive with pleasure that my long depending business is at length accomplished. My best respects attend Mr. Harrison and I shall not fail to keep his directions in mind. Indeed as I have planning and planting in view, I dare say my Pegasus will not be over-weighted, as the Jockies say, by this accession of fortune.

Pray let me know the account of fees, and so forth, that I may put myself out of your debt, so far as money may do so, for your attention to this matter. The friendly exertions you have made in my behalf merit my best thanks : assuredly my Christmas cheer has digested much better for the pleasure of your correspondence. Believe me ever, your faithful and obliged,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH, *January 7th, 1812.*

[*Willis's Current Notes*]

TO THE REV. E. BERWICK, LEIXLIP, IRELAND, PORT
PATRICK¹

MY DEAR SIR,—I certainly cannot wholly exculpate myself from the charge of being a very lazy correspondent yet I fear from the tenor of your last kind remembrance that I have appeared more ungrateful and careless than I really am owing to your not having received a copy of my last poem Don Roderick with a letter inclosed. I hasten to releive myself in part of the consequences of this miscarriage by transmitting another copy under a post office cover which as it must go round by London will be a few days later than this letter. My Swiftian labours have been greatly interrupted by sickness in my family my whole little folks having one after the other taken the measles—the youngest had an awkward and alarming

¹ Letter from Berwick (30th July 1809) about Swift: "On the subject of my countryman Swift, a man admired, esteemed & loved by me as he was by every man of talents & virtue with whom he was personally acquainted." He then mentions all the tracts he has relative to Swift's life: "1. Lord Orrery's libel—it cant be called his life. 2. Dr. Delany's Strictures on it. 3. Mr. Deane Swift's life of the Dean. 4. Sheridan's life & 5thly. Mr. Berkely's Literary Relics of all these you must be possessed: the latter's acct. principally relates to his Conduct towards Stella & Vanessa a subject of peculiar difficulty to unravel, & which I am sorry to say, is not to the honor of his heart & moral feelings—for I think his unaccountable behaviour hastened the death of the one, & broke the heart of the other: at the same time I say this, I am convinced his own mind never knew perfect peace & content after their deaths. . . . What will surprise you to know is, that I had in my possession some years ago the original rough draughts of all Vanessa's letters to Swift in her own hand, of all which I have now copies. . . . As to Consanguinity between Swift & Stella I believe there was none." On 2nd October 1810 he writes: "Mr. Miller of Albemarle Street . . . told me ten or eleven Vols of Swift were printed before he left London. . . . I suppose the life is written. . . . I wish I could see how you manage about his women—a good case I wish to see made out by you for him." Again, on 22nd January 1812, he writes: "I am glad you have still your eye on Swift. I should be sorry he was not edited by you—for you have thrown such light on Dryden as have made me wish that more of our poets should pass through your hands—how we shall manage about Vanessa *hic labor, hoc opus est*. I have prepared all the letters which passed between them, & arranged them in a chronological order . . . when you come to that part of [the life] which respects his conduct towards her, if you will send me what you say of it, you will oblige me & I will give you my opinion. Miss Seward treats him as a rascal."

relapse but thank God is now recovering though still very weak. My summer amusements have been rather of a rural than literary nature. I have got a sort of Laracor¹—a waste spot of 100 or 120 acres which I am planting and enclosing with the purpose of building a little Cottage upon it. Its only beauty consists in its commanding a fine reach of my native river Tweed which whirls round my little domain. But alas ! it is to use a Scotch phrase *as bare as the birk tree at Yule—even*. I am however like all the world planting trees *facturæ nepotibus umbram*.

In the wilds Swift is not forgotten though I have been lying on my oars. I have recovered some original letters not indeed of great value excepting one from Lewis to Swift which seems to explain the reason why the History of the 4 last years of Queen Anne was laid aside being nothing less than a remonstrance on the part of Lord Oxford and the Deans Tory friends against his making it public in 1735. The other letters exhibit some curious traits of the Deans peculiar humour particularly some which are addressed to the Revd. Mr. Blachford of Wicklow. Other pieces I have scraped together and I have great expectations from a certain square box of letters & papers which have descended to Mr. Steele from one of Swifts exors and have it is said been inspected by no one since the Deans death. But I am to rely upon you for light upon the melancholy chapter of Vanessa which I have no doubt will be as clear and brilliant as that which you have thrown upon the Legion Club.² I shall begin to write the life very soon though I will not send it to press until I have exhausted every source of information which has been pointed out to me. I was strongly tempted to have visited Ireland this last spring upon this errand as well as to return my personal

¹ In February 1700 Swift was given the living of Laracor, a village near Trim, some twenty miles from Dublin.

² Berwick had supplied Scott with notes on the Legion Club in a letter of 26th September 1809.

thanks to you and my other kind patrons but some private business of great consequence to my family unfortunately prevented me nor do I see any great prospect of making my visit good during the year which is now commencing.

I will make enquiry at Ballantyne about your work¹ but I rather think Mr. Millar has changed his purpose of printing in Edinb. as I think I should otherwise have heard my typographical friend mention it among the works he had in progress. If I am mistaken it will give me the greatest pleasure to look over the proof sheets not in the hope of doing them any service but for the pleasure I should expect in the perusal.

By the way I cannot conceive what our friend Lydia White is doing—she must have been extremely shocked by the death of the late Bishop of Dromore so recently after his preferment. She used often to talk of him and always in the highest terms. We have an exceedingly amiable specimen of your prelacy at present residing here in the person of the Bishop of Meath.² We have become acquainted with him through his Ladys relation who is of the House of Moray.

All the goodwishes of the Season to you my dear Sir and your family. Believe me your truly obliged and faithful

WALTER SCOTT

EDINB 16th January 1812.

[*Original MS. and Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The promise of the purse has flattered my imagination so very agreeably that I cannot help sending you an ancient silver mouth-piece to which if it pleases your taste you may adapt your intended

¹ Probably his *Lives of Marcus Valerius Messala Corvinus and Titus Pomponius Atticus*, etc., with notes and illustrations, etc. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1813.

² See later letter to Southey, 23rd February 1812, p. 77.

labours—This besides is a genteel way of tying you down to your promise and to bribe you still farther I assure you it shall not be put to the purpose of holding dirty bank-notes or vulgar bullion but reserved as a place of deposit for some of my pretty little medals and nicknatories. When I do make another poetical effort I shall certainly expect the sum you mention from the booksellers for they have had too good bargains of me hitherto and I fear I shall want a great deal of money to make my cottage exactly what I should like it.¹ Meanwhile between ourselves my income has been very much increased since I wrote to you, in a different way. My predecessor in the Office of Clerk of Session retired to make room for me on the amiable condition of retaining all the emoluments during his life which from my wish to retire from the bar and secure a certain though distant income, I was induced to consent to and considering his advanced age and uncertain health the bargain was really not a bad one. But alas ! like Sindbads Old man of the sea my coadjutors strength increased prodigiously after he had fairly settled himself on my shoulders so that after five years gratuitous labour I began to tire of my burthen. Fortunately Mr. Bankes late superannuation act provides a rateable pension for officeholders obliged from age and infirmity to retire after long and

¹ "Every body here," Joanna had written on 2nd January, "enquires at me about a new Poem which you are writing, for which you are to receive 3000 guineas (money enough this to fill the purse I am to net for you)." She then describes her meeting with George Ellis at Sunning Hill. "His appearance at first is rather gawky than sensible, but there is an unaffected kindness in his manner that pleases you from the first ; and when he sits down by you, he chats very agreeably with great freedom & variety. . . . We only met him at the end of our visit. . . . I wish we had met him at the beginning of it. . . . What you said of James Graham has pleased me much. . . . I have seen a poem on his death. . . . I have not yet heard who is the author." The "*song*" Scott alludes to was one of his own which so much resembled a song in Miss Baillie's *Orra* that he had burnt it. "I put no faith at all," she wrote, "in the inferiority which you so gallantly ascribe to yours. . . . Let it therefore, I pray you, be your good pleasure that I shall have a copy of this said song, which still exists in your tenacious memory tho' it has been cast into the fire."—*Walpole Collection*.

faithful service and my old friend very handsomely consented to be transferd from my gall'd shoulders to the broad back of the public, although he is likely to sustain a considerable diminution of income by the Exchange to which he has declared himself willing to submit as a penalty for having lived longer than he or I expected. To me it will make a difference of £1300 a year no trifle to us who have no wish to increase our expence in a single particular and who could support it upon our former income without inconvenience. This I tell you in confidence because I know you will be very well pleased with any good fortune which comes in my way.

Every body who cares a farthing for poetry is delighted with your volume¹ and well they may. You will neither be shocked nor surprized at hearing that Mr. Jeffrey has announced himself as being of a contrary opinion. So at least I understand for our very ideas of what is poetry differ so widely that we rarely talk upon these subjects. There is something in his mode of reasoning that leads me greatly to doubt whether, notwithstanding the vivacity of his imagination, he really has any *feeling* of poetical genius or whether he has worn it all off by perpetually sharpening his wit on the grindstone of criticism. I intend to ask him what he says of Orra's² apology for her extravagant liveliness which I think contains in about six or eight lines three pictures the most perfect and beautiful in themselves and the most affectingly illustrative of her own state of mind that ever entered into the head of man—or woman either.

I am very glad that you met my dear friend George Ellis, a wonderful man who through the life of a statesman and politician conversing with princes wits fine ladies and fine gentlemen and acquainted with all the intrigues and tracasserie of the cabinets and ruelles of foreign

¹ The third series of *Plays on the Passions*.

² The heroine of Joanna Baillie's *Orra : a Tragedy in Five Acts*, one of her *Plays on the Passions*.

courts has yet retained all warm and kindly feelings which render a man amiable in society and the darling of his friends.

The author of the elegy upon poor Grahame is John Wilson,¹ a young man of very considerable poetical powers. He is now engaged in a poem called the *Isle of palms* somewhat in the stile of Southey. He is an eccentric genius and has fixd himself upon the banks of Windermere but occasionally resides in Edinburgh where he now is. Perhaps you have seen him. His father was a Paisley wealthy manufacturer ; his mother a sister of Robert Syme. He seems an excellent warm-hearted and enthusiastic young man something too much perhaps of the latter quality places him among the list of originals.

As for my *song* I have really tried to recall it but it was very hastily sketched out and I read yours so immediately after that the rhimes and epithets have become blended inseparably in my memory but if I can separate any fragments of my dress from your one you shall have them.

I have made your apology to Mr. Erskine but he would be so excessively gratified by a single line from your own fair hand that I think you must gratify him by the next Edinr. packet you have no more ardent admirer.

Our streets in Edinbr. are become as insecure as your houses in Wapping. Only think of a formal association among nearly fifty apprentices aged from twelve to twenty to scour the streets and knock down and rob all whom they found in their way. This they executed on the last night of the year with such spirit that two men have died and several others are still dangerously ill from the wanton ill treatment they receivd. The watchword of these young heroes when they met resistance

¹ John Wilson (1785-1854), author, the "Christopher North" of Blackwood's, for which he wrote most of the once famous "Noctes Ambrosianae." *The Isle of Palms* was written by 1810 and published at the beginning of 1812. The elegy Scott here refers to is *Lines sacred to the memory of the Rev. J. Grahame*, Glasgow, 1811. Grahame was author of *The Sabbath* and other poems. See above.

was *Mar him* a word of dire import and which as they were all armed with bludgeons loaded with lead, and were very savage, they certainly used in the sense of Ratcliffe Highway. The worst of all this is not so much the immediate evil which a severe example will probably check for the present as that the formation and existence for months of such an association holding regular meetings and keeping regular minutes argues a woeful negligence on the part of the masters of these boys the tradesmen and artisans of Edinbr. of that wholesome domestic discipline which they ought in justice to God and to man to exercise over the youth intrusted to their charge ; a negligence which cannot fail to be productive of every sort of vice crime and folly among boys at that age.

I remember Miss Wright perfectly well. O how I should wish to talk over with her our voyage¹ in the good ship the Duchess of Buccleuch Capt Beatson Master ; much of which from the novelty doubtless of the scene is deeply imprinted in my memory. A long voyage it was of twelve days if I mistake not with the variety of a sojourn of a day or two in Yarmouth roads. I believe the passengers had a good deal of fun with me for I remember being persuaded to shoot one of them with a pea-gun [?] who to my great terror lay obstinately dead on the deck and would not revive till I fell a-crying which proved the remedy specific upon the occasion.

¹ Joanna had mentioned, in her letter of 5th December 1811, meeting a lady who boasted that she had once shared a bed with Walter Scott : " Dont start : it is upwards of thirty years since this irregularity took place, and she describes her old bedfellow as the drollest looking, odd, entertaining little urchin that ever was seen. I have told her that you are a great strong man, nearly 6 feet high, but she does not believe me." She discloses further information on 2nd January in a postscript : " The lady who claims you as her old acquaintance is a good old friend of ours Miss Wight sister of Dr Wight late Professor of Divinity in Glasgow. She went to London by sea in the same ship with you & your Aunt many years ago, and she says you were not a disagreeable child but very far from it & very amusing." As will be seen, Scott has got the name wrong. In point of fact Lockhart says the irregularity occurred on board the Leith smack when Scott was only four years of age [1775] and on his way to Bath.

Yesterday I had the melancholy task of attending the funeral of the good old Duke of Buccleuch. It was by his own direction very private but scarce a dry eye among the assistants a rare tribute to a person whose high rank and large possessions removed him so far out [of] the social sphere of private friendship. But the Dukes mind was moulded upon the kindest and most single-hearted model and arrested the affections of all who had any connection with him. He is truly a great loss to Scotland and will be long missed and lamented though the successor to his rank is heir also to his generous spirit and social affections.

Adieu my kind friend. Remember me most kindly to Miss A. Baillie the Dr. and Mrs. Baillie in all which recollections my wife warmly participates. Ever yours

W. SCOTT

EDINR. 17 *January* 1812

There is no *spring* in the mouth of the purse. It merely clicks together and is pulld open by the little knob and loop.

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO ROBERT SHORTREED, SHERIFF SUBSTITUTE, JEDBURGH

MY DEAR SIR,—I received your letter some days ago, and I assure you I would have sincere pleasure in any opportunity of furthering your interest. Indeed it so happened that I had anticipated your wishes, for Lord Dalkeith happening to mention the subject of our old friends farm, and the terms of his destination I took the liberty to endeavour to impress strongly upon his Lordship the natural motives of friendship and connection which made Dr. Elliots wishes in favour of [his grandson] very natural in the circumstances and I think his Lordship would probably mention what I said to the Duke. Lord Dalkeith is now in London, otherwise I would have again

ventured to mention the matter to him ; being by no means upon those habits of intimacy with the Duke of Buccleuch himself to entitle me to intrude my sentiments upon him with respect to the management of his property. I should think your friend and relative Dr. Ogilvy could mention such a subject with greater propriety than I could, and in such an application you are perfectly at liberty to make use of my name, as being acquainted with the wishes of Dr. Elliot and the motives on which they were founded, which indeed I concur to be very reasonable. I remain with best wishes—very faithfully
yours
WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 18 *January* 1812 [?]

I have delayed writing two or three days in hopes that without the formality of a direct application to the Duke I might have had some opportunity of sliding in your request among other matters but I have been disappointed.
[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO PATRICK MURRAY

MY DEAR MURRAY,—I received your kind letter, but have not yet had an opportunity of meeting General Oswald¹ whom I should be happy to become acquainted

¹ Sir John Oswald (1771-1840), son of James Townsend Oswald, and grandson of James Oswald, was born at Dunnikier, Co. Fife. In August 1812 he was appointed to the staff of the Peninsular army, which he joined on 22nd October 1812, during the retreat from Burgos. He was present with Lord Wellington in the cavalry affair of 23rd-24th October, and on 25th October succeeded to the command of the fifth division during the absence of Sir John Leith. Writing to Scott on 29th October 1811 Murray informs him that one of General Oswald's sisters "is married to my cousin & nephew Robert Smyth & another to Ld. Elgin. My friend the General is I think one of the finest fellows & one of the pleasantest, that I have met with for a long time. I knew him when we were boys at St Andrews. The reason why I wish to see him, & I told him so, is on account of his acquaintance with the Grecian Islands. He was the first who carried our arms there, he took Zante &c. . . . He is so very full of Border Greek stories, that at every one I heard I grudged your absence. . . . You will find him very communicative & gentlemanlike. He is one of the greatest of your admirers & says you describe the *Greeks* to the life."—*Walpole Collection*.

with. I knew his brother, poor fellow, very well, who must have been now at the very head of his profession had not his career been cut short by an untimely death. I will not fail to seek an opportunity to avail myself of your introduction to the General so soon as I shall hear that he is in Edinburgh.

I now inclose you a packet of papers, regarding a projected rail-way in Berwickshire, a matter much out of my way, and not I should suppose particularly in yours, as it is neither intended as a military road nor even particularly adapted for the conveyance of Artillery : but my friend & relation Mr. Scott of Harden whose Hobby horse this rail-way happens to be, is desirous of making every one canter along with him— My commission is however ended when I transmit the inclosed, which I readily undertook between two intimate friends. I had proposed to see you this last autumn, but was delayed by the necessity of overlooking some improvements on a small farm which I have purchased, & where I intend one day to build me a cottage. I have got a plan from Mr. Stark,¹ very fanciful & pretty on the outside, but in the interior the best laid out, & most commodious house that I ever saw. I should wish you to see this young man when you come to Edinburgh. He has more taste than all the Architects I ever saw, put together.

I have got two drawings of Elibank for you, but unfortunately both have proved daubs, so that I am ashamed to send them.

Mrs. Murray & you will join with us in regretting the excellent Duke of Buccleuch. Death has really been active among the worthy & eminent during the last twelve

¹ Lockhart says that Scott, immediately on securing Abbotsford requested Stark to give him a design for an ornamental cottage in the style of the old English vicarage, but that Stark died before this could be done. A plan, however, was drawn, for later Scott tells Terry that "I have been obliged to relinquish Stark's plan which was greatly too expensive." In 1813 he writes to Terry : "And this brings me to the loss of poor Stark with whom more genius has died than is left behind among the collected universality of Scottish architects."

months. My poor friend John Leyden¹ is gone also—His ardent literary curiosity carried him to Batavia where he imprudently shut himself up in a library which had not been opened for many years, & almost immediately caught a fever, which carried him off in a few days. These melancholy events have at least the effect of attaching one yet more warmly if possible to the old friends who remain to us. Among the few I have, none My dear Murray is more valued than you.

Mrs. Scott joins in kind compliments to Mrs. Murray. I hope your Nursery is well. The measles have have [*sic*] walk'd through mine but thank God, very easily.

I must not conclude without telling you that I have seen a letter from Col. Cadogan² containing some curious details of the battle of Arroyo Molinos. Prince D'Aremberg³ & Col: Voiriol, prisoners on that *chamade* were compelled to confess that the British troops had not their equals in Europe for appearance & discipline. They would not allow any superiority of loyalty or courage, but acknowledged "that a charge of British bayonets was perfectly irresistible, & own their *three cheers* worth many thousand *Vive l'Empereur*." Voiriols Regiment, 40th french Infantry had been engaged with Cadogans (71st) both at Fuentes d'Onor & at Molinos, & when Cadogan told him his orders on both occasions were to push on without loading or firing or stopping for prisoners or

¹ Leyden had accompanied Lord Minto to Java in 1811. He died at Cornelis on 28th August of that year.

² Henry Cadogan (1780-1813). During the early part of the Peninsular War he served as aide-de-camp to Sir Arthur Wellesley. He distinguished himself at Fuentes de Onoro, Arroyo dos Molinos, and at Vittoria, where he fell.

³ [General Rowland] "Hill in his dispatch says that the peasantry gave Girard no news of his approach. But in Blakeney's interesting narrative of this campaign there is a story told that two *Afrancesados* warned the Frenchman of Hill's approach, and that he refused to credit them. This was told to Blakeney by his prisoner, Colonel the Prince of Aremberg. . . . Nearly 1,300 prisoners had been taken, including General Bron, commanding the cavalry, the Prince of Aremberg, colonel of the 27th *Chasseurs*."—OMAN, *History of the Peninsular War*, Section XXIX, chap. iii.

plunder, but to dash through every obstacle with fix'd bayonets & three cheers, he interrupted "Ah voilà ce que c'est Mon cher Colonel, on ne peut jamais résister à cela ! *Cependant*, if we chose to attack with the bayonet our success would be the same." In this Col: Cadogan acquiesced, providing they had other enemies at the time to cope with. They all agree that the French army is totally disorganized & every soul disgusted with the war in the Peninsula.

Firmness therefore My dear Murray & patience under taxes on our part with some common sense in the Spanish Government (a rare commodity) may bring this business to a happy termination. I will make Ballantyne put up with this parcel a copy of a Poem called Catalonia written by a very clever fellow¹— He is Sir Edward Pellew² Secretary & the notes contain some curious information which is the reason I send it. The bard seems to me however to croak a little too much—Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 18 *Jany.* [1812]

I inclose a copy of Cadogans plan of the surprize at Arroyo Molinos which you will please to return with your convenience as I keep it for illuminating the Edinr. Register.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ *Catalonia, a Poem, with Notes illustrative of the present State of Affairs in the Peninsula*, London, 1811, crown octavo. The author was Edward Hawke Locker (1777-1849), father of Frederick Locker-Lampson, author of *London Lyrics*, etc. He was a man of varied talents and accomplishments. In 1804 he became civil secretary to Sir Edward Pellew [Lord Exmouth]. "As his grandfather had known Johnson, so he was an 'old and dear friend' of Scott."—BIRRELL, *Frederick Locker-Lampson: A Character Sketch*, 1920.

² Afterwards Viscount Exmouth.

TO MRS. CLEPHANE

EDINBURGH *Jan.* 18th 1812.

MY DEAR MRS. CLEPHANE,—I really feared that the Sound of Mull had acquired some of the properties of Lethe and washed all your border friends out of all your memories, so that your token of remembrance was in every respect most truly acceptable. I am aware what a world of business must have instantly devolved upon your hands on your return to your little kingdom, how many wrongs would claim to be redressed, how many feuds to be composed and how many encroachments on legitimate authority to be repressed, if not punished. The Kylies have I fear been among your copse woods during your long absence, the boats have been worn out in smuggling parties, the roof of the mansion unrepaired, and the whole list of petty misfortunes incurd which usually attend the absence of the Laird or Lady. All these, however, have been doubtless long since settled and forgotten and you have had leisure in a fine frosty day for walking on your beautiful beach, and “sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore” and recollecting your lowland friends— I have sent the advertizement to Mr. James Thomson who will, I suppose, do the needful. The sale of wool was dull last year, which may be rather unfavourable for your purpose, but I trust the Russian trade will soon be open which will give a new impulse to our manufactures, and of course add to the value of Sheep-land—

As for me, I have not only been planting and enclosing, and gallantly battling nature for the purpose of converting a barren brae and haugh into a snug situation for a cottage, but moreover I have got the prettiest plan you ever saw and everything in short, excepting a great pouch full of money, which is the most necessary thing of all. I am terribly afraid I must call in the aid of Amphion and his harp, not indeed to found a city, but

if it can rear a cottage it will be very fair for a modern lyre. If I fairly set to writing I must be stationary for this year, but I do not relinquish the hope of once more seeing the lovely isle, some day or other. As for Miss Margaret I am so angry with her for putting me off with a post-script that I will not tell her about twenty things that but for this she should have known. For example, she shall be left in ignorance as to the shape, size and inscription upon the broadsword of the great Marquis of Montrose, which is now my property, and hanging over the chimney-piece in my library. Moreover she shall know nought of the gun of Rob Roy (no bad possession in these days of murder and street robbery) and which has also fallen into my possession. And lastly, I will not say a word of my original picture of the Viscount of Dundee profaned by the covenanters under the name of the Bloody Clavers—From all which indications you will infer that my nick-nackatery has been greatly enriched since you did me the honour to inspect it.

I have been lately a good deal affected by the loss of two excellent men, and both my very good friends. Poor John Leyden has perished in Batavia, dying as he lived, in the ardent pursuit of knowledge. He imprudently threw himself into a library which had been shut up for many years, without waiting till it was ventilated: he was seized with a shivering fit almost instantly which announced the fatal fever that carried him off in three days. We have lost also the poor Duke of Buccleuch who had a mind more amiably compounded than almost any one I ever knew. I attended his funeral yesterday which was for his rank very private, only about 40 persons being present. But few men have been followed to the grave with so many tears of friendship and gratitude.

We have had domestic anxiety besides as all our children have had the measles—very favourably, thank God, though little Charles had an alarming relapse. We are all now upon foot again. Thus you see, if my letter

be rather dull there is some reason for it. Mrs. Scott joins in kindest compliments to you and the young ladies, and I ever am faithfully and respectfully your obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Northampton*]

TO JOSEPH TRAIN¹

DEAR SIR,—I have been prevented by some distress in my family of a transient nature however and now passed over, from thanking you as I ought to have done for your kind and liberal communications. A copy of the Lord of the Isles waits your acceptance when you will have the goodness to tell me how it should be sent.

It would give me great pleasure if at any time I could be of the least service to you. I do not mean as an author for “therein the patient must minister to himself” and I trust the success of your own labours will gratify you completely in that particular. But although I am not acquainted personally with any of the gentlemen of

¹ Joseph Train (1779-1852), born in the parish of Sorn, Ayrshire, where his forbears had for generations been land-stewards on the estate of Gilmilns-croft. His father removed when he was young to Ayr, where he was apprenticed to a weaver. While serving in the Ayrshire militia his taste for literature attracted the attention of his colonel, Sir David Hunter-Blair, through whose influence he became a gauger in the Excise, and after serving in Ayr and Aberfeldy was transferred to Newton Stewart in 1813, where his work took him over the greater part of Galloway and Carrick. His interest in antiquities, and a question raised about Turnberry Castle, brought him into correspondence with Scott, to whom he wrote regularly thereafter, addressing him always as “Revered Sir.” Lockhart gives a ballad which suggested the romance of *Guy Mannering*, a ballad recovered by Train from the recitation of an old woman in Castle Douglas. This with the introduction to Scott’s knowledge of Old Mortality, and the transmission to him of the legend on which was founded Wandering Willie’s tale in *Redgauntlet*, were perhaps the most notable services rendered by Train to the Waverley novels. Train’s published work includes two small volumes of verse, a history of the Isle of Man, and a history of the Buchanites. He also contributed to the Galloway section of Chalmers’ *Caledonia* and wrote literary and antiquarian articles for various works of the day. See *Memoir* by John Patterson, 1857, and a *MS. Memoir* by his son, who tells of the kindness shown him by Scott at the end of his life when he visited Abbotsford.

your board it is possible I might have the means, or make them, of forwarding the prospects which you may entertain of advancement. At any rate I should most willingly try if you are pleased to give me the opportunity at any time. I beg pardon for mentioning this as you may very probably have better and more powerful friends. But good wishes you know can never do harm.

I was very much interested and entertained by your legendary communications some of which remind me of traditions which I have heard in my youth.

I should be happy to have an opportunity to return my thanks in person, and I am Dear Sir Your obliged humble Servt.

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 18 *January* 1812.

[*Owen D. Young*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

EDINR., 23d *January* 1812

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—I should be very unjust to your kindness did I not take an early opportunity to inform you that the pension business is at length completely and finally settled & my income bettered by at least £1000, a year *nett*. I thought it proper after the pension had been fixed to offer my colleague Mr. Home to make up to him any difference between his pension and what he formerly drew which he has in part accepted, limiting himself however to £960, instead of £800 which is fair enough. I delayed this information for a few days both that I might assure you of my final settlement with Mr. H. and also that I might send you a plan of my cottage. But though I have succeeded in the former and most material point the procrastination of the Architect which poor fellow is owing to very precarious health has hitherto prevented my sending the sketch and plan.

We are now my dearest friend as comfortable in our circumstances as even your kindness could wish us to be. Neither my wife nor I have the least wish to enlarge our expense in any respect as indeed our present mode of life is of that decent kind which without misbecoming our own situation places us according to the fashions and habits of our country, at liberty to mix in the best society here. So that we shall have a considerable saving fund for the bairns. I cannot express my gratitude to you my ever kind friend for the interest you have taken in this matter & I must again beg you to return my best thanks to Mr. Arbuthnott for the zeal with which at your request he pressed a ticklish & troublesome business.

The good we meet with in this world is always blended with qualifying bitterness and mine has been heavy enough. I do not reckon in this the anxiety I have experienced from the measles running through my family in this inclement [*word missed out*] because it was what they must one day sustain & it has pleased God they have all [*indecipherable*] this alarming complaint though it has left them very weak & will render long precautions necessary. But what I must really set down as a calamity are the deaths of poor John Leyden and the excellent Duke of Buccleuch. The former was known to the Marquis & I think I mentioned to your Ladyship in my last letter that he had died at Batavia in consequence of imprudently spending some time in a library which had been shut up for years owing to which he caught the country fever & died in three days.

The Duke of Buccleuch had been long breaking, and I thought the last time I saw him (about a month before his death) that the hand of fate was upon him. Yet his family accustomed to his daily and gradual decline were not much alarmed and the final close was very sudden as he died in the arms of his son who had been his nurse and secretary during his illness and had scarcely ever quitted his room. He was buried on the 17th in the

family Vault at Dalkeith, and I never saw so many weeping eyes at the funeral of either high or low. Everything was by his own express desire as private as was possible which indeed was necessary for considering that the whole border counties had expressed a desire to send in their Yeomanry and local Militia corps, and his situation as Lord Lieutenant of this County there would have been at least ten thousand men in attendance. As it was arranged only 40 or 50 noblemen and gentlemen were invited who were connected with the family either by relationship clanship or strict friendship. The Duchess Dowager has behaved with the firmness of principle supporting the whole family under their distress by her own strength of mind. My friend Lord Dalkeith succeeds to the power and fortune of his father with some points which these evil times require, for with all his father's good-nature he has something in him which will not allow it to be trampled upon and I think that in our homely ballad rhyme he is likely to prove—

——a *hedge* about his friends
A *heckle* to his foes——

When I tell your Ladyship that a heckle is the many-tooth'd implement with which hemp is broken and scutch'd I think you will understand the allusion.

I mention these particulars because I believe your Ladyship is interested in the family. I hope soon to send you the drawings and plan meanwhile I ever am your Ladyship's truly obliged and faithful

W. S.

I need hardly say that my best wishes for the new year attend the Marquis & your family.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO THE REV. ALEXR. MURRAY, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,
MANSE OF URR, CASTLE DOUGLAS ¹

EDINR., 10th Feb. 1812

MR DEAR SIR,—The loss of our late lamented friend is indeed to be mourned, not only by us, but by all our friends to learning and talent. I am anxious to do everything in my power to do honour to his remains, and to serve if possible his distressed parents. But I own that I should not feel in the least confident of doing much good without the hopes of assistance you so kindly hold out to me. It appears to me in the meantime that we must remain quiet till we hear what papers are likely to be transmitted from India. Lord Minto, who was our poor friend's warm patron, being upon the spot and a man of

¹ Alexander Murray, D.D. (1775-1813), was a great linguist. "From the spoken tongues of Europe he advanced . . . to those of Western Asia and North-east Africa."—*D.N.B.* As a fellow-student at Edinburgh University Lord Cockburn remembered him—"a little shivering creature, gentle, studious, timid, and reserved." He early formed the acquaintance of John Leyden, and through Leyden became a contributor to the *Scots Magazine*. In 1806 he was appointed assistant to Dr. James Muirhead, parish minister of Urr, Kirkcudbrightshire, whom he succeeded at his death in 1808. He hailed with enthusiasm Scott's *Minstrel* and *Marmion*. In July 1812 he was appointed professor of oriental languages in Edinburgh University. His great work, the *History of the European Languages, or Researches into the Affinities of the Teutonic, Greek, Celtic, Slavonic, and Indian Nations*, was edited by Dr. Scott, and published, with a life, by Sir H. W. Moncreiff, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1823. See *Constable and his Literary Correspondents*, vol. i.

In the course of his letter to Scott of 7th February (*Walpole Collection*), when he gave full details of Leyden's multifarious literary activities, Murray had said that Leyden "belonged to a class of men whose intellectual walk is not to be limited by numerous difficulties, nor even imagined by ordinary minds. Indefatigable in labour, adventurous and almost eccentric in research . . . I need not remind you of the immense variety of his literary attainments that were, I am perfectly convinced, not united in any other man in Britain. . . . Both Dr Leyden and I understood Arabic, Persic & Hebrew &c long before we left college." Leyden wrote a paper on the Malay, the Laos, the Birman, and the other Indo-Chinese languages for the 10th volume of the *Asiatic Researches*. He also made one or two translations of the Gospels in these dialects, mentioned in the *Biblical Society's Report* for 1811. In 1803 Murray succeeded him in the editorship of the *Scots Magazine*.

letters himself would probably take effectual care of his papers and manuscripts, which I fear will be the greater part of his succession. A contested election, which is at present dividing, I had almost said *ravaging*, the county of Roxburgh, makes my intercourse with the family of Minto less frequent though I hope not less friendly than heretofore. But I will write to Mr. Gilbert Elliot upon the subject as soon as possible, and acquaint you with the result. The matter will require some delicacy of management ; for, on the one hand, I believe there are some creditors whom our friend had not yet found the means of discharging ; and, on the other hand, his unfortunate brother from bad habits and mental infirmity is not a very *certain* person to deal with ; besides, we must consider it as a possible, though I fear not a probable case, that poor Leyden may have made some settlement of his affairs, or left some directions which may either supercede our interference or direct us as to his own wishes.

With heartfelt sorrow, my dear sir, I agree with you in thinking that science has lost in Leyden one of her most zealous and successful followers and ourselves a friend whose loss cannot be made up to us.—Believe me, dear Sir, your very faithful servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Rosebery*]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

EDINR. 23 *February* 1812

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,—I assure you I feel my wrongs to you deeply as a correspondent but this has been a busy and rather an oppressive winter to me. My whole family have been laid up with measles going off like minute-guns, one taken ill ere another was recovered and the loss of several of my brothers & sisters in that horrid disorder as well as what has been sustained by many of my friends makes me tremble even at its name. Thank God my young people are all doing very well. I have deluged them with asses milk since they begun to recover

and really it operates as if they had been like Dog-berry written down asses colts for they have overcome under its genial influence all the peaking, pining & consumptive coughing which form the sequel of that unpleasant & perilous disease. I have had also poor Leyden's loss to lament a loss never to be made up to Indian literature. I am anxious to know what he has left & am in hopes if other assets fall short to contrive out of his literary remains something that may secure his aged parents from the evils of absolute penury in addition to this most grievous & to them overwhelming domestic calamity. The Duke of Buccleuch's death has also given me much pain as I always experienced a sort of paternal kindness from him a kindness the more valued by me as it flowed entirely from his own warm & generous disposition & had no connection with literary patronage about which he was very indiffernent. Besides all these events & their necessary consequences on my feelings I have been engaged in some transactions which were necessary to render my present official situation a service of real income which hitherto it has not been & which have fortunately proved successful. All these matters have necessarily turned my mind of late some what from literature. I have however never ceased to think of you & your undertakings ; & I send as a small contribution to the history of 1811 a plan of the affair of Arroyo Molinos & extract of a letter from Col. Cadogan to my friend Majr. Hastings shewing the impression the behaviour of our troops has made on the French Officers. If you have occasion to use the information you will of course omit names. Cadogan is a fine fellow. He was seen after the battle kissing & hugging his highland grenadiers & weeping over those that had fallen. Such an officer will be followed to the jaws of death & our army has many such, now that the cold iron-hearted system of the German discipline has thank God given way to moral management & that a soldier is reckoned something better than the trigger of

his gun. As for the Spanish struggle if they must give way which Heaven forfend they will owe it entirely to the execrable choice they have made of governors who seem precisely to realize Cowper's "Men who cannot teach & will not learn"—*My* plan (a great authority you'll say) was at the very commencement of the struggle to have besieged & taken Barcelona which gave us the full power of assisting the Catalonians the most warlike & zealous people in Spain.

Ballantyne is to send you a volume of Somers & I have desired him to put up with it a (very indifferent) poem on Catalonia written by Sir Edward Pellew's naval secretary a clever & well-accomplished man whom however it has not pleased the Gods to make poetical. But the notes are curious as written on the spot and by an intelligent spectator. I would fain hope with you that the new Regency will do something but nothing less will satisfy me than that they should arm Lord Wellington with full powers to raise & command an Anglo-Spanish army: and if they add to them the authority of Adelan-tado I believe they will take the only means to save themselves effectually. One of the great difficulties which he finds in advancing is the want of active co-operation on the part of the Spanish authorities in procuring the necessary supplies. I think it was our King William who observed that in the allied army the Spanish troops were not to be depended upon owing to the false pride with which they concealed from him their deficiencies of men, stores &c &c.— Their general would never allow that they were not fully equipped and recruited until a day of battle confuted their assertions. I suspect this touches at once on the greatest blemish in their national character.

Your friend the Bishop of Meath¹ has been here some weeks and I have seen him frequently. He is a very

¹ Thomas Lewis O'Beirne (1748?-1823), divine and pamphleteer, son of a Roman Catholic farmer, who sent him to St. Omer to train for the

pleasant man with much of the *l'usage du monde*.—In a sermon preached here he touched upon the Lancastrian mode of education as unconnected with national religion which drew down a most furious attack on him from Sir Harry Moncrieff¹ the Pope of our Presbyterian divines that is of the *wild* party among them. It is funny enough to see the most vehement & rigid Calvinists in league with the Metaphysical school of the Edinburgh Review but politics like misery make men acquainted with strange bed-fellows.

I am glad to hear Don Pelayo² is advancing though priesthood. But Thomas adopted Protestant views. Later, by patent dated 18th December 1798, he was translated to the see of Meath, and remained there until his death. “He made an admirable prelate, appointing to vacant benefices on the ground of merit, enforcing personal residence, aiding in the revival of the office of rural deans, and insisting upon the stricter examination of candidates for ordination.”—MANT, *History of the Church of Ireland*, ii. 736-41. He was author of an “Ode” to Lord Northampton, and of some of the minor contributions to the *Rolliad*, the chief of which was the fourteenth “Probationary Ode.”

¹ Sir Henry Moncreiff, D.D., Bart., afterwards Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood of Tulliebole (1750-1827), Scottish divine. Became one of the ministers of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh. He soon showed himself as one of the most influential ministers of the city. “A very eloquent and vigorous preacher, he also took a leading part in the business of the Church courts, especially the general assembly, where he rose to be the leader of the evangelical party.”—*D.N.B.* In 1785 he was elected moderator of the assembly.

“The Lancastrian School was a symptom and a cause of the advance of popular education, and was therefore a vital event, and a bold experiment at this time [1812]. It was the achievement of the Whigs and of the pious; and, though not openly opposed, was cordially hated by all true Tories, who for many years never ceased to sneer at and obstruct it. And when its success seemed certain, some of the established clergy disgraced themselves by trying to prevail on the Presbytery of Edinburgh to crush it indirectly; and in aid of this Presbyterian effort the Bishop of Meath, who happened to be residing here [Edinburgh], was easily persuaded by the Episcopalian illiberals to preach an ignorant and insolent sermon against it. On this we discharged Sir Harry [Moncreiff] at him; who considerably improved the funds by a sermon which, as he spoke it, trampled on his lordship in a triumphant and contemptuous refutation. It was one of Sir Harry's greatest practical shouts. The original school was a long, low, wood and brick erection, stretched on the very top of the Calton Hill; where it was then the fashion to stow away everything that was too abominable to be tolerated elsewhere.”—LORD COCKBURN, *Memorials of his Time*.

² This was the title given to the first draft of the poem afterwards named *Roderick, the last of the Goths*.

with Spanish gravity and slowness. I expect much from it.

I have not seen or heard of Count Julian¹ nor do I even know what manner of book it may be but your eulogium is enough to make me inquisitive.

One of your Windermere friends John Wilson is here & has just published a book of poetry. The principal is the Isle of Palms containing many beautiful passages but I think rather too much prolonged considering the simplicity of the plot, for the present public taste. Upon the whole he is a fine enthusiastic genius and a true lover I should think of the virtuous in morality & the beautiful in poetry.

My kindest wishes attend your wife & family. I am not without hopes of offering them in person for I leave Ashestiel this season. My own cottage is not founded and my immediate accomodation very very limited : so I dare say I shall make a raid upon Cumberland like my Ancestor and namesake Walter the Devil unless I should rather wander into the North Highlands. Ever yours most truly

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO ALEXANDER YOUNG, W.S., QUEEN STREET

[23rd February 1812]

DEAR SIR,—One of the Committee of our Selkirkshire farming Club appointed to enquire into the cultivation of *fiorin* has applied to me for the means of advancing his

¹ *Count Julian*, a tragedy by Walter Savage Landor, was published at the beginning of 1812. "The same subject was in various forms occupying both Southey and Scott about the same time ; Southey in his epic of *Roderick*, called in the first draft *Pelayo* and sent in instalments as it was written to Landor ; and Scott in his *Vision of Don Roderick*. Landor had begun his tragedy, as it happened, at the same time as Southey his epic, in the late summer of 1810, and he finished it early the next spring."—SIDNEY COLVIN, *Landor* [English Men of Letters], 1881.

researches. I know no way in which I can do so unless you will permit me to introduce him to you for half an hours conversation & if possible this morning at any hour after twelve as he must leave town tomorrow.

He is a very acute sensible man and may be very likely the means of extending this beneficial discovery. Excuse this liberty in Dear Sir yours truly

Sunday morning

W SCOTT

[*Herries*]

TO JAMES ELLIS ¹

EDINBURGH, 27 *February*, 1812

DEAR SIR,—You could not do me a more acceptable pleasure than by favouring me with the particulars concerning the battle of Otterbourne, contained in your favour of the 22nd. It is certainly one of the most interesting incidents of Border history, and from the spirited old ballads to which it has given rise, as well as from a remote connection with some of the heroes of the day, has always been a favourite subject of investigation with me. It is many, many years since I was on the spot, a little boy on a little pony, and with a travelling companion too careful to permit any of the researches which, even then, I had much inclination to make

¹ James Ellis of Otterburn, antiquary and solicitor, interested himself in Scott's collecting of ballads and legends. He was no relation of George Ellis. He had written on the 22nd February taking exception to Scott in the *Minstrelsy* having made Ellis's neighbour, Mr. Davidson, "the Proprietor of Otterburn." He proceeds, as one "fond of Border history," to add some notes on Percy's collection: "Your Remark on Johnie Armstrong that one of the last Border Reivers was of that family and lived within the last century is amply confirmed by the confession of John Weir an accomplice when under sentence of death in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh a copy of which I have." He tells of a curious poem of the eighteenth century on the battle and its author's reference to the author of the ballad. To the Abbotsford copy of this letter of Scott a note is prefixed: "This is, the first I find. Mr. Ellis & Mr. Davidson bought the Otterbourne Estate & divided it Mr. Davidson taking the west side of the Burn which was the largest & Mr. Ellis the East comprising the old House & manor &c."

concerning the locality of the battle. When I had determined to commence editor of the old songs in the *Border Minstrelsy*, I was referred to Mr. Davidson to satisfy some enquiries respecting the field of Otterburne, and you have the general result in the book, although the erroneous expression that he was the proprietor of *Otterbourne* could not be his, but must have arisen from my confounding the castle and manor, with the field called Battle Crofts. I conceive in other respects, his information coincides nearly with yours. The Scotch appear to have left their camp and moved in an oblique direction against the flank of the English, who had unawares engaged themselves among the followers of their camp. Such movements, executed by a body of 10,000 or 12,000 men, together with the various changes of position during the vicissitudes of so long and desperate an engagement, must have covered a great space of ground, and the incidents of the battle probably gave name to various places within a mile or two of each other. I have some thoughts of being in the North of England this summer, and will certainly take an opportunity to survey the field of Otterbourne. As you mention Mr. Johnes' ¹ translation of Froissart, I have to apologize to you, as a Border antiquary, for the meagreness of the few notices I have given him upon the names of the warriors of Otterbourne. I had no doubt Mr. Johnes would have taken my communications merely as suggestions,

¹ Thomas Johnes (1748-1816), translator of Froissart, was born at Ludlow, Shropshire. He belonged to an old Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire family. He came to live at his estate of Hafodychtryd (or Hafod), Cardiganshire, in 1783. The house was accidentally burnt on 13th March 1807, when Johnes's Welsh manuscripts and edition of Froissart, with nearly the whole of his valuable library and several paintings and works of art, were destroyed (Nichols, *Lit. Illustr.*, viii. 285). Johnes rebuilt the house and formed another library. He set up a private press in a neighbouring cottage, from which he issued some of his best-known works (Timperley, *Encycl. of Lit. and Typogr. Anecd.*, p. 298). In 1803-5 he published his well-known translation of *Froissart's Chronicles* "at the Hafod Press, by James Henderson," 4to (reviewed by Sir W. Scott in *Edinburgh Review*, v. 347 ff.).

which a little research on his own part might have confirmed or refuted, in place of which he took the patches out of my letter, without giving me even an opportunity to revise them. I could have added a good deal, and cleared some doubts. *Davy filium*, for example, I am now satisfied was the common Border name of *Davidson*. Depend upon my correcting the passage you complain of in my next edition of the *Minstrelsy*, presently in the press. I believe I must do it by a notice at the end, as the sheet is through the press where the blunder occurs. I shall the less regret the error I have been led into, since it has been the means of procuring me so much useful information. I shall proceed, without farther circumlocution, briefly to notice some of your kind communications.

In confirmation of what you say of Weir's dying speech, you will find a curious account of a circuit held at Newcastle in Roger North's *Life of the Lord Keeper Guilford*,¹ where you will find also a singular description of the Northumbrians who attended the judge within their respective baronies, on his progress from Newcastle to Carlisle. They are described as having long beards, riding small nags, and all great antiquaries in their own bounds. Before setting out on the [*hiatus in MS.*] the Judge and his attendants were each presented with arms, *i.e.* a dirk, with a knife and fork, by the mayor of Newcastle.

In the curious poem you send me an extract from, I doubt whether the author meant any particular known

¹ *The Life of the Right Honourable Francis North, Baron of Guilford . . . wherein are inserted the characters of Sir Matthew Hale, Sir George Jeffries, Sir Leoline Jenkins, S. Godolphin and others, etc.* [Edited by Montagu North.] MS. Notes [by F. Hargrave]. J. Whiston : London, 1742.

The Hon. Roger North (1653-1734) was attorney-general under James II. "The labour that North bestowed upon the lives of his brothers was extraordinary. The life of the lord keeper was written and re-written again and again. Defaced though the style is by the use of some unusual words, there is a certain charm about it which few readers can resist, and the *Lives of the Norths* must always remain an English classic and a prime authority for the period with which it deals. The *Life of Lord-keeper North* was first issued under Montagu North's editorship in 1742."

individual by the "Great Bard" who sung Chevy Chase. I incline to think he apostrophises the unknown author, and merely supposes from the theme he had chosen, that "he graced the field of Otterbourne with his presence." I conceive that some minstrel of the House of Northumberland, not feeling the ancient ballad of Otterbourne quite a palatable subject, had used a freedom with the incidents to put it into its more popular, though fabulous, form. Percy's idea is certainly erroneous, from the grounds you have so well pointed out. "To be well logyd," implied, I suppose in reference to an army merely, to have a convenient spot for encamping, or rather, hutting their soldiers. In the Scotch edition of the ballad, Douglas objects to the probable want of provisions at the place of appointment: I observe that Raymond Delaval was taken in the castle of Pontland (Ponteland) two days before the battle. There may, however, have been another of the same noble name engaged in it. But at present I have only room to subscribe myself, Your obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

You mention no post Town. I put Hexham at a venture.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO

ABBOTSFORD, 29 Feb. 1812

MY DEAR SIR,—Your favour, and soon after your poem, reached me here when I was busy in planting, ditching, and fencing a kingdom, like that of Virgil's Melibæus, of about one hundred acres. I immediately sent your poem to Ballantyne, without the least intimation whence it comes. But I greatly doubt his venturing on the publication, nor can I much urge him to it. The disputes of the

Huttonians and Wernerians,¹ though they occasioned, it is said, the damning of a tragedy in Edinburgh last month, have not agitated our northern Athens in any degree like the disputes between the Bellonians and Lancastrians.² The Bishop of Meath, some time a resident with us, preached against the Lancastrian system in our Episcopal chapel. The Rev. Sir Henry Moncrieff, a Scottish Baronet, and leader of the stricter sect of the Presbyterians,

¹ James Hutton (1726-1797), the first great British geologist. His *Theory of Rain* was strongly attacked, especially by J. A. Deluc, and caused much controversy. He was the originator of "the modern explanation of the phenomena of the earth's crust by means of changes still in progress." His famous work, *The Theory of the Earth, with Proofs and Illustrations*, published in Edinburgh in 1795, did not receive adequate attention until John Playfair published his classic *Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory* (Edinburgh, 1802). His *Investigation of the Principles of Knowledge and of the Progress of Reason from Sense to Science* is metaphysical. He inclined to the Berkeleyan view of the external world and maintained that "religion was evolved from barbarous cults, that monotheism was a revealed truth, that Christianity in reforming the religion of the Jews abolished their 'abominable and absurd rites.' . . . He rejected all 'mystery' in religion and was unjustly accused of infidelity."—*D.N.B.*

Abraham Gottlob Werner (1750-1817), father of German geology. His development of the mining school at Freiberg made it "one of the centres of scientific intelligence in Europe." He demonstrated the chronological succession of rocks; a subject which he named geognosy. "His followers preached the doctrine of the aqueous origin of rocks, and were known as Neptunists; their opponents, who recognized the important part taken in the construction of the earth's crust by subterranean heat, were styled Vulcanists."—*Encyclo. Britt.*, 14th Ed. (1929). Robert Jameson (1774-1854), a Scottish mineralogist—the most distinguished of Werner's British pupils—was the first great exponent in Britain of the Wernerian doctrines.

² Andrew Bell (1753-1832), founder of the Madras system of education, was the second son of a barber in St. Andrews. He pushed the new system in many places. But a young Quaker, Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838), published a pamphlet in which he described an independent scheme of education, though he acknowledged his indebtedness to Bell's already published report (1797). Bell admitted that his rival showed originality in applying and amending his system. A Mrs. Trimmer pointed out to him that the Church of England would suffer by Lancaster's success. Bell began to speak ungenerously of Lancaster's work, while Lancaster retaliated by declaring himself the originator of the system. Bell had the support of the Church party; Lancaster the support of those who wished to make education religious but not sectarian. "In form the question at issue was which of the two had been the originator of the common system, but in substance it was whether the Church should thenceforth control the education of the people; and consequently no settlement was possible."—*D.N.B.*

replied in a thundering discourse of an hour and a half in length. Now, every body being engaged on one side or the other, I believe no one will care to bring forth a poem which laughs at both. As for me, upon whom the suspicion of authorship would probably attach, I say with Mrs. Quickly, "I will never put my finger in the fire, and need not ! indeed no, la !" I shall be in Edinburgh in the course of a week, and learn the publishers' determination ; and if it be as I anticipate, I will find means to return the MS. safely under an office frank.

I like the poetry very much, and much of the sentiment also, being distinctly of opinion that the actual power of reading, whether English or Latin or Greek, acquired at school, is of little consequence compared to the habits of discipline and attention necessarily acquired in the course of regular study. I fear many of the short-hand acquisitions will be found "in fancy ripe, in reason rotten." After all, however, this applies chiefly to the easier and higher classes ; for, as to the lower, we are to consider the saving of time in learning as the means of teaching many who otherwise would not learn at all. So I quietly subscribe to both schools, and give my name to neither. I trust the *charlatanism* of both systems will subside into something useful. I have no good opinion of either of the champions. Lancaster is a mountebank ; and there is a certain lawsuit depending in our courts here between Dr. Bell and his wife, which puts him in a very questionable point of view.

Believe me, dear Sir, yours ever truly,

W. SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott, 1832*]

TO LORD MELVILLE

[*Private and confidential*]

MY DEAR LORD,—The Chief Baron has advised me to address your Lordship directly upon a matter of some

delicacy and importance which he has already hinted at in a late letter to your Lordship. I will enter upon it without preface as my own concern in it explains itself and I would not willingly intrude upon your Lordships time longer than is absolutely necessary.

There has been long a very general persuasion in Berwickshire that Mr. George Baillie is tired of his seat and does not again mean to represent the County. In the meantime Robertson of Ladykirk assisted by the indefatigable Lord Lauderdale has been privately canvassing and has gone some length in combining a party chiefly among the wealthy farmers many of whom have lately acquired freeholds in that county and have for obvious reasons a strong disposition to democracy. Their party owing partly perhaps to inactivity on Mr. Baillies part is your Lordship may be assured gaining ground daily. In these circumstances and in the event of Mr. Baillies retiring my particular friend & relation Mr. Scott of Harden is disposed provided government approve of his views to propose himself as a candidate for the county which he represented in early life.

I need say nothing of Mr. Scotts qualifications in point of fortune and family which must be well known to your Lordship. With respect to general politics there is not a man in Scotland more convinced of the necessity of rallying round the crown & constitution at this crisis nor is there one more incapable of requesting the countenance of an administration which had not his thorough confidence & approbation. It may be also necessary to add that of late years Mr. Scott has been chiefly settled at his family seat & his popularity has been constantly increasing among the free holders; he has been at the head of every public measure in Berwickshire and partiality apart I do not know any gentleman in Scotland who has better pretensions to offer himself to represent an opulent County or whose knowlege & habits of business are likely to render more useful to his constituents.

Mr. Scott requested me to be present as a mutual freind when he communicated his views on this subject to the Chief Baron and for the same reason I am now the medium of offering them to your Lordships consideration. My best apology for personal intrusion when I have neither vote nor interest is that Mr. Scott conceived his good wishes towards your Lordships interest would be best expressd through a person connected with him by confidence and relationship who is at the same time both from gratitude and affection so sincerely attachd to your family.

There is one circumstance which Mr. Scott has particularly at heart namely that this application should be in no respect considered as implying the least wish to interfere with Mr. Baillies interest should he wish to retain his present situation and I am aware how much difficulty and delicacy there may be in ascertaining this point. Perhaps supposing Mr. Scotts views to be in other respects acceptable to your Lordship it might be requested of Mr. Baillie to exert himself in stopping Mr. Robertsons progress in the County and his answer would probably bring matters to a point as to his sitting or retiring.

The Chief Baron received Mr. Scotts communication in the kindest manner but of course referd him to your Lordship for the opinion of government. I am aware that your Lordship may consider deference as due to Mr. George Home in this matter & I have no hesitation in saying that everything which can be reasonably expected on Mr. Scotts part will be done to shew his wish to bury all recollection of former disputes which certainly ought not to be revived at a moment when there is so strong a necessity that all good men should make common cause.

There must however be many considerations to influence your Lordships opinion on this matter which I cannot possibly know or anticipate. I will therefore [close] with expressing my hopes that your Lordship[s] goodness will favour me with a few lines of answer so soon

as you can give the business your consideration and I am
ever My dear Lord Your truly faithful and obliged

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 29th february 1812.

[*Nat. Lib. Scot.*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

MELROSE, 2 March [1812]

YOUR letter my dear Morritt found me in this place dirtying myself every morning to the knees in hopes of making clean walks for Mrs. Morritt at Abbotsford and throwing my money not indeed upon the waters but upon the earth in hopes of seeing it after many days in the shape of shrubs and trees. The pleasure I have in this work perhaps from its novelty but I would fain hope from the nature of the thing itself is indescribably interesting to me. I have got nature in a very naked state to work upon but a brae a haugh and a fair river furnish good component parts and the very toil and exertion necessary to make out the rest is happiness of itself.

It is very shameful in me to have been so long in acknowleging your kind information about your Memorabilia. My work *Rokeby* does and must go forward or my trees and inclosures might perchance stand still. But I destroyd the first canto after I had written it fair out because it did not quite please me. I shall keep off peoples kibes if I can for my plan though laid during the civil wars has little to do with the politics of either party, being very much confined to the adventures and distresses of a particular family. I must certainly refresh my memory with the scenery and brighten the chain of freindship at Rokeby before I can make great progress in my task. 'But your kind memoranda have helped me greatly in the mean-time.

I must unquestionably read *Roncesvalles*¹ from which I expect great pleasure. For reviewing it I can hardly undertake considering the numerous and important affairs of Abbotsford on earth and Rokeby on paper. If however I was sure that I could do it in a way to please the author I should scarcely decline. Certainly he is the first treasury poet since the splendid epistle of Paul Pybus¹ and should therefore be encouraged by his brethren as a rich man is always considered as a credit to his relations. I was once the most enormous devourer of the Italian romantic poetry which indeed is the only poetry of their country which I ever had much patience for ; for after all that has been said of Petrarch and his school I am always tempted to exclaim like honest Christophero Sly "Marvellous good matter—would it were done."² But with Charlemagne and his paladins I could dwell for ever.

I grieve to hear of Lady Aberdeens disorder—so young so beautiful and apparently so good and amiable. But Consumption seems often to seize upon those victims whom we would most wish to exempt from its grasp. Her brother Lord Hamilton is I am afraid dying of the same disorder. That Lady Hood should have been so far removed from us and her friends is a hard circumstance. But I comfort myself with the reflection that it was right for her to go and I own I should have [been] much hurt at her remaining behind Sir Samuel. India will amuse her better than she expects. She will like the *fasti* the splendour and the dignity of her situation. She will be also in her right

¹ Morritt had strongly recommended Scott to read *Roncesvalles* : a poem, in twelve books, by Richard Wharton, London, 1812. "The previous 'Treasury poet' referred to was Charles Pybus, who was Commissioner from 1797 to 1803, and published a folio in 1800 entitled the *Sovereign*." —F.L.

² *First Serv.* My lord, you nod ; you do not mind the play.

Sly. Yes, by Saint Anne, do I. A good matter, surely : comes there any more of it ?

Page. My lord, 'tis but begun.

Sly. 'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady : would 'twere done !

Taming of the Shrew, Act I, sc. i.

place and that is every thing where keen feeling and great vivacity are predominant. I sent a letter by her to poor John Leyden. But man proposes and God disposes. He had fallen a victim to his unextinguishable thirst after knowledge which carried him to the baneful climate of Batavia where he went in pursuit of his researches into Indian antiquities. The good old Duke of Buccleuch is also dead and has not left a kinder or more generous heart behind him. If you meet the present Duke in London in society pray make up to him on my recommendation and in my name. He is a good *cut* of a border Chief firm manly and well principled and only differing from his father by having something in him that will not make it safe to return his kindness with ingratitude and then to apply for fresh favours which was often successfully practised on his father.

I am grieved for your loss in Boldero's house—it is no joke even to a great fortune to lose £9000. But your Rokeby is thank God no castle in the air and you will feel your loss less than many others.

When I come to Rokeby this summer¹ I propose to travel by Otterbourne and examine the field of Battle.

The length of visages among our Edinr. Whigs is truly edifying the more so as they proclaimed by sound of trumpet an instant triumph the very day before the fatal news arrived of their absolute defeat. I am at a loss to divine how they could practice this self deception or what were the data.

The devil take all new inventions more and less ! I have been writing with a patent pen this hour which only scratches the paper without letting down ink ! Charlotte joins in love to Mrs. Morritt.

W. SCOTT

[*Law*]

¹ Scott had to postpone this visit till the autumn on account of his planting operations and because Ballantyne was urging him to have *Rokeby* finished for publication by Christmas.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BUGGLEUGH

MADAM,—I am just honord with your Graces Commission which you may depend upon my executing with all possible delicacy on my return to Edinburgh which takes place on Monday. The poor bard (I will not as my precieuse friend Miss Seward once expressd herself name his thrice unpoetical name) is I fear a person whom it will indeed be difficult to serve to any essential purpose yet nature has been liberal to him in many respects and it is perhaps hard for those born under better auspices to censure his deficiencies very severely.

I am here as busy as possible dressing up this little spot which is to say truth as bare a doll as any of your Graces young ladies ever made bibs & tuckers for. But the Spaniards have a comfortable proverb namely Time & I against any other two.¹ I was much surprized and gratified by Mr. MacDonalds kind and most acceptable attention who sent me some most beautiful fruit-trees of his own grafting which I have just seen carefully planted. This is being a counsellor in good earnest not only to give good advice but the means of following it. I trust one day like Master Justice Shallow to press the Duke to stay & eat a last years pippin of my own raising. All Mr. Macdonalds kindness I owe more or less directly to your Grace and the Duke and beg to add my thanks for this among so many obligations. I trust Bowhill will be in some progress this year and habitable in the next at farthest. It is not by the carriage road so distant from Abbotsford as Ashestiel.

I have no other pretence for intruding longer on your Graces leisure except to send Mrs. Scotts respects and to beg my own to the Duke & the young Ladies. I have one or two of my very best wonderful stories in readiness for Lady Isabella whose eyes twinkled so blithely at the stupendous funeral of Willie Wilkie. The little namesake

¹ "I and Time against any two," attributed to Philip of Spain.

and my good Lord John I hope remember me & my kindest wishes attend my fair Goddaughter. Believe me dear Madam with the greatest respect & regard Your Graces most obedient Very faithful Serv

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 20 *March* [1812]

I give the Duke joy of the enlivening Russian intelligence.

[*Buccleuch*]

TO JAMES BAILEY, TRINITY COLL., CAMBRIDGE ¹

DEAR SIR,—I was not a little surprized and gratified by the perusal of your poetical exercize in which you have thought it worth while to commemorate my Gothic minstrelsy in such elegant & classical Latin. I beg you will accept my best thanks for a distinction for which I ought to be the more grateful the less it is deserved. Upon the point of latinity the approbation of a Scotsman is not worth having but I may be allowed to express my sense of the merit of the poem as to sentiment and expression. With every wish for your successful progress in your studies & for your general welfare I am Dear Sir Your obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 22 *March* 1812

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO ROBERT SURTEES

MANY thanks, my dear Sir, for your friendly communications, which are always both useful and entertaining. Ballantyne sends you by my order a copy of

¹James Bailey (d. 1864), classical scholar, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He graduated B.A. 1814, M.A. 1823. For many years he taught in the Perse Grammar School, Cambridge, from which he retired on a pension. He contributed to the *Classical Journal*. He is best known for his edition of *Forcellini's Latin Dictionary*, 2 vols. (1828).

Gawain Douglas, which is clean and fair, but very indifferently half-bound, price 1l. 15s. which is not now much out of the way : a very good copy fetches 2l. 5s. and upwards ; and this, if carefully re-bound, will look just as well. If you don't like it, however, you are to return it through your Durham bookseller, Andrews, who is here just now, and is to take charge of it. So much for the Prelate of Dunkeld.

I will be much flattered by the appearance of your beautiful verses in the Register, and shall take measures accordingly. I understand by a letter from Park, that he is about to re-publish some of Ritson's Works (the Popular Songs, I believe,) on an extended plan.¹ Do you know anything of such an undertaking ? With respect to the ship belonging to the Armada, sunk in the Sound of Mull, which James Duke of York seems to dispute with the Earl of Argyle, I observe that divers were actually set to work upon her, as we learn from Sacheverel's voyage to Icolmkill, in 1688, as well as from tradition.² The

¹ The date of this letter must be about the end of March, the postmark being 1st April and Park's letter having been written on 21st March. Park had approached Scott for permission to include his poetical version from a Norman French ballad in the British Museum "which was given to the late Mr. Ritson and by him transferred to me. He had requested it for a projected re-impression of his 'Ancient Songs'; the whole preparation for which I believe (except this ballad) perished in a literary conflagration kindled by his own hand, a little before his death. Being myself engaged at this time in printing a new and extended edition of Ritson's English Songs, permit me to hope it will not be disagreeable to you that I should add your excellent version of the above relique to the 'Ancient Ballads' contained in vol. 2 of Ritson's collection :—since its insertion there will very nearly accord with your original intention. I represented this circumstance about ten days ago to Mr. Heber, who approved of my suggestion."

A Select Collection of English Songs [edited by J. Ritson], second edition, with additional songs and note by T. Park. 3 vols. Rivington : London, 1813. See letter from Surtees to Joseph Frank (3rd May 1812), *Memoir of Surtees*, p. 356.

² William Sacheverell, one time Governor of the Isle of Man. He produced *An Account of the Isle of Man, its inhabitants, language, soil, etc. With a voyage to I-Columb-kill : to which is added, a dissertation about the Mona of Caesar and Tacitus, etc. . . . by Mr. Thomas Brown*. J. Hartley : London, 1702. The voyage to I-Columb-kill was undertaken in 1688. On his way thither Sacheverell "cast Anchor in the Bay of Tauber Murry, which for its bigness, is one of the finest and safest in the World. . . Italy itself, with all the Assistance of Art, can hardly afford any thing more Beautiful and Divert-

fishers shewed me the place where she lay, in the Bay of Tobermory, and said that there had been a good deal of treasures and some brass cannon got out of the wreck. Sacheverel mentions having seen the divers sinking threescore feet under water, continuing there an hour, and returning loaded, whether with plate or money, the spoils of the ocean. I conceive the *colourable* pretext set up by the Earl of Argyle was, that, the wreck having taken place before the Union of the Crowns, he, as hereditary Admiral of Scotland, had acquired in the vessel a *jus quæsitum*, as the civilians say, not defeasible by the paramount right of the Duke of York, as Admiral of England and Scotland, which did not exist till afterwards. And truly I think his claim was the stronger of the two, though, for the time, his means of supporting it were weaker. It always entertains me very much when I can observe how these scantlings of information, which such old-fashioned puddling antiquaries as you and I dig up, come by degrees to bear on each other.

As for Anthony Beck,¹ your warlike Archbishop, who, the devil take him, was a main agent at the unfortunate battle of Falkirk, he rather lies out of my immediate field.

ing ; especially when the weather was clear and serene, to see the Divers sinking threescore Foot under Water, and stay sometimes above an hour, and at last returning with the spoils of the Ocean ; whether it were Plate, or Money, it convinc'd us of the Riches and Splendor of the once thought *Invincible Armada*." Owing to bad weather at Tobermory he "resolv'd on a Journey cross the Isle of Mull, to the so much celebrated *Il-Columb-Kill* (call'd commonly *I-Columb-Kill*) ; in English, *St. Columb's Church*."

¹ Antony Bek (d. 1311). Scott has made a slip in referring to him as an archbishop. He was Bishop of Durham from 1283. "When the war of Scottish independence broke out, Bek . . . joined Edward I in his second expedition to Scotland in 1298. . . . In the battle of Falkirk Bek commanded the second division of the English forces, and, when he came near the foe, ordered his cavalry to await reinforcements before charging. 'To thy mass, bishop,' cried a rough knight, 'and teach not such as us how to fight the foe.' He spurred on, was followed by the rest, and routed the enemy."—*D.N.B.* In 1300 he became involved in ecclesiastical disputes, which lasted till his death. See Robert de Graystones, *Historia De Statu Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, published in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*, and more accurately edited by J. Raine in his *Historiæ Dunelmensis Scriptores* for the Surtees Society, 1839.

I should be interested in anything that occurs about him, however.

A Northumberland gentleman called Ellis,¹ proprietor of the lands and castle of Otterbourne, has sent me some curious notices, chiefly local, on the subject of that celebrated engagement. He says, that his house is partly composed of the walls of the old tower which Douglas was beleaguering when Percy came upon him. Pray do you know anything of this gentleman? He writes like a person that takes some interest in past times. We shall, I hope, meet this autumn, as I have thoughts of being in the north of England, and certainly not without visiting Mainsforth. The cottage upon my own little farm is so very small, that I believe I shall be driven to be a Rambler from mere want of room at home.

This whole country is still under deep snow. If the thaw be followed by wet weather, the Lord have mercy on the crops! Of thaw, however, there seems to be no sudden prospect, for it snows at this moment as hard as ever.

I have not yet got the seventh volume of Somers, either for you or myself. By a very absurd arrangement they were first sent to London. Believe me, with respects to Mrs. Surtees, Ever yours most truly, W. SCOTT

EDINBURGH, *end of March* [1812—*by postmark,*
which also is 1st of April.]

[*Abbotsford Copies and Surtees Memoirs*]

TO MRS. APREECE

NOTHING, my dear Mrs. Apreece, could have been a kinder token of your friendly recollection than the *annonce* of your present name being speedily to be changed for one of the most distinguished in modern philosophy.

¹ See *A History of Northumberland*, by John Hodgson (Newcastle, 1827), part ii. vol. i. p. 115.

When you have time to talk to Mr. Davy¹ of your 'Scottish cousins, he will probably remember our meeting in Westmorland some years ago, when we passed two or three days in company together—long enough at least for me to learn that he added much general accomplishment to his unrivalled scientific talents. I am afraid it will be many a day ere I see London again, for my lease of Ashestiel being out, I have bought a small farm, about 3 miles from Melrose, on the banks of the Tweed, and am now ruining myself by planting and building, which are great enemies to travelling. May I, therefore, hope our next meeting will be in the land of Cakes, when I will say nothing of the pleasure with which we shall receive Mr. Davy and you, because I am sure you will give me credit for all I can say on that subject. You know I am a pretty good gentleman usher to the lions of my own country, and I shall be particularly happy to have an opportunity of soliciting more attention to them than your time permitted you to give when you were at Ashestiel.

Charlotte offers her kindest and best wishes both to you and Mr. D., to which my dear Mrs. Apreece I add mine in all truth and sincerity, and am truly, Your affectionate and obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN., 3rd April, 1812.

Your little friends are all well, after having weathered the measles this winter.

[*Hawick Arch. Soc.*]

¹ Mrs. Apreece had announced her engagement on 1st April, when she wrote: "I am not going to claim an Epithalamium, though *your* fancy might give to even such a subject, with such an object (as poor I myself) something beautiful, but I am going to claim your good wishes in heart & kindness. . . . Mr. Davy you would like were he known to you & I do ample justice only to his taste in knowing that he does admire the Bard of Fingal's Cave (you remember our visit there)."

When Scott and his wife went on an excursion to the English Lakes in the autumn of 1805, he and Wordsworth climbed Helvellyn in the company of Humphry Davy, "an illustrious philosopher, who was also a true poet—

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

[ASHESTIEL, PM. *April 4th*, 1812.¹]

I OUGHT not even in modern gratitude which may be moved by the gift of a purse, much less in minstrel sympathy which values it more as your work than if it were stuffed with guineas to have delayed thanking you my kind friend for such an elegant and acceptable token of your regard. My kindest and best thanks also attend the young lady who would [not] permit the purse to travel untenanted. I shall be truly [glad] when I can offer them in person but of that there is no speedy prospect. I don't believe I shall see London this great while again which I do not very much regret were it not that it postpones the pleasure of seeing you and about half a dozen other friends. Without having any of the cant of loving retirement and solitude and rural pleasures and so forth I really have no great pleasure in the general society of London. I have never been there long enough to attempt anything like living in my own way and the immense length of the streets separate the objects you are interested in so widely from each other that three parts of your time is past in endeavouring to dispose of the fourth to some advantage. At Edinburgh, although in general society we are absolute mimics of London and imitate them equally in late hours and in the strange precipitation with which we hurry from one place to another in search of the society which we never sit still to enjoy, yet still one may manage their own parties and motions their own way. But all this is limited to my own particular circumstances for in a city like London

and might have been one of the greatest of poets had he chosen ; and I have heard Mr. Wordsworth say, that it would be difficult to express the feelings with which he, who so often had climbed Helvellyn alone, found himself standing on its summit with two such men as Scott and Davy."—LOCKHART. Davy married Mrs. Apreece on the 11th of this month.

¹ This is added in a later hand. Scott gives no address or date. This is the postmark date ; the letter is presumably some days *earlier*.

the constant resident has beyond all other places the power of conducting himself exactly as he likes. Whether this is entirely to be wished or not, may indeed be doubted. I have seldom felt myself so fastidious about books as in the midst of a large library where one is naturally tempted to imitate the egregious epicure who condescended to take only one bit out of the sunny side of a peach. I suspect something of scarcity is necessary to make you devour the intellectual banquet with a good relish and digestion as we know to be the case with respect to corporeal sustenance.

But to quit all this egotism which is as little as possible to the purpose you must be informed that Erskine has enshrined your letter among his household papers of the most precious kind. Among your thousand Admirers you have not a warmer or more kindly heart. He tells me Jeffrey talks very favourably of this volume. I should be glad for his own sake he took some opportunity to retrace the paths of his criticism but after pledging himself so deeply as he has done I doubt much his giving way even unto conviction.

As to my own share I am labouring sure enough but I have not yet got on the right path where I can satisfy myself I shall go on with courage for diffidence does not easily beset me and the public still more than the ladies "stoop to the forward and the bold." But then in either case I fancy the suitor for favour must be buoyed up by some sense of deserving it, whether real or supposed. The celebrated apology of Dryden for a passage which he could not defend "that he knew when he wrote it, it was bad enough to succeed" was, with all deference to his memory certainly invented to justify the fact after it was committed.

Have you seen the pilgrimage of Childe Harold, by Lord Byron : it is I think a very clever poem but gives no good symptom of the writers heart or morals. His heroic notwithstanding the affected antiquity of the stile

in some parts is a modern man of fashion and fortune worn out and satiated with the pursuits of dissipation and although there is a caution against it in the preface you cannot for your soul avoid concluding that the author as he gives an account of his own travels is also doing so in his own character. Now really this is too bad. Vice ought to be a little more modest and it must require impudence at least equal to the noble lord's other powers to claim sympathy gravely for the ennui arising from his being tired of his wassailers and his paramours. There is a monstrous deal of conceit in it too for it is informing the inferior part of the world that their little oldfashioned scruples and limitation are not worthy of his regard while his fortune and possessions are such as have put all sorts of gratification too much in his power to afford him any pleasure. Yet with all this conceit and assurance there is much poetical merit in the book and I wish you would read it.

I am glad to observe you are still to be at Sunning hill because I hope you will get acquainted with my dear George Ellis who is really a charming person.¹ The Doctors constant yet ineffectual attendance on the poor old King must be a painful confinement. It is greatly to be wished that death would close the scene.

I have got Rob Roys gun a long Spanish barrel'd piece with his initials R. M. C. for Robt. Macgregor Campbell which latter name he assumed in compliment to the Argyle family who afforded him a good deal of private support because he was a thorn in the side of

¹ This letter is obviously a reply to Joanna's of 4th March, in which she declares: "Here is your purse," and later mentions that "being made of frosted silver it must be cleaned with soap & water when tarnished. Within the purse you will find . . . a purse penny, which my niece Elizabeth hopes you will do her the honour to accept from her little store of old coins. She has picked out from them what she considered assisted by the skill of her Aunt Agnes (being the Antiquarian of the family) as the best." If the date assigned to this letter is correct, Scott has evidently become confused about the meeting with George Ellis, for, as we have seen, Joanna gave him an account of her meeting with him in her letter of 2nd January. See note to Scott's letter of 17th January, p. 59.

their old rival house of Montrose. I have moreover a relique of a more heroic character—it is a sword which was given to the great Marquis of Montrose by Charles I and appears to have belonged to his father our gentle King Jamie. It had been preserved for a long time at Gartmore¹ but the present proprietor was selling his library or great part of it and John Ballantyne the purchaser wishing to oblige me would not conclude a bargain which the gentleman's necessity made him anxious about till he flung the sword into the scale. It is independent of it's other merits a most beautiful blade. I think a dialogue between this same sword and Rob Roys gun might be composed with good effect.

We are here in a most extraordinary pickle considering that we have just entered upon April when according to the poet "primroses paint the gay plain" instead of which both hill and valley are doing penance in a sheet of snow of very respectable depth. Mail coaches have been stopd, shepherds I grieve to say lost in the snow in short we experience all the hardships of a January storm at this late period of the Spring. The snow has been near a fortnight: if it departs with dry weather we may do well enough but if wet weather should ensue the wheat crop through Scotland will be totally lost.

My thoughts are anxiously turnd to the peninsula though I think the Spaniards have but one chance and that is to choose Lord Wellington Dictator. I have no doubt he could put things right yet. As for domestic politics I really give them very little consideration. Your friends the Whigs I suppose are angry enough at the Prince Regent but those who were most apt to flatter his follies have little reason to complain of the usage they have met with and he may probably think that those who were true to his father in his hour of calamity may have the best title to the confidence of the son. The

¹ Then the home of the Grahams. It is situated in the Port of Menteith parish in Perthshire, near the Lake of Menteith.

excellent private character of the Old King gave him great advantages as the Head of a free government. I fear the [P.] will long experience the inconveniences of not having attended to his own.

Mrs. Siddons¹ as fame reports has taken another engagement at Covent Garden. Surely she is wrong. She should have no twilight but set in the full possession of her powers. Adieu, my dear friend. Mrs. S. joins in kindes[t] respects to your sister the D. and Mrs. Baillie.

W S.

I hope Campbells plan of lectures will answer. I think the brogue may be got over if he will not trouble himself by attempting to correct it but read with fire and feeling. He is an animated reciter but I never heard him read.

As for Sir Geo: Mackenzies play² it was damnd to everlasting redemption as Elbow says and that after a tolerable fair hearing. The most mortifying part of the business was that at length even those who went as the authors friends caught the infection and laughd most heartily all the while they were applauding. The worthy Bart. has however discoverd that the failure was entirely owing to a set of chemists calld Wernerians who it seems differ in their opinion concerning the cosmogony of the world from Sir Georges sect of philosophers the Hut-tonians.³ This has proved a most consolatory discovery to his wounded feelings.

I am much flatterd by the devotion of the young Cantab and only wish it was strong enough to induce

¹ The *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1812 prints the *Farewell Address, spoken by Mrs. Siddons on leaving the stage 29th June 1812*, written by Horace Twiss, Esq. If Dibdin's *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage* (1888) is to be trusted she had already spoken a farewell address on 13th March.

² Sir George S. Mackenzie (1780-1848), seventh baronet of Coull, mineralogist. He discovered the identity of diamond and carbon and wrote geological and miscellaneous works. I cannot trace his excursion into drama. He wrote on the geology of the Faroe Islands and on travel in Iceland, and we shall find a letter later to Scott on vitrified forts, in which Scott was interested so far back as 1797. See note, vol. i. p. 49.

³ See note to letter to Rev. R. Polwhele, p. 84.

him to make a pilgrimage to Scotland where I could better express my sense of his kindness.

I have a great mind before sealing this long scrawl to send you a list of the contents of the purse as they at present stand. I. Miss Eliz. Baillie's purse penny call'd by the learn'd a denarius of the Empress Faustina. II. A gold broach found in a bog in Ireland which for aught I know has fastend the mantle of an Irish princess in the days of Cuthullin or of Nial of the nine hostages.¹ III. A toadstone, a celebrated amulet which was never lent to any one unless upon a bond for a thousand merks for its being safely restored. It was sovereign for protecting new born children and their mothers from the power of the fairies and has been repeatedly borrowd from my mother on account of this virtue. This may rival the Ministers flax. IV. A coin of Edwd. I found in Dryburgh Abbey. V. A funeral ring with Dean Swifts hair. So you see my nicknackatory is well supplied though the purse is more valuable than all its contents.

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO MISS CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT, NORTH CASTLE STREET
(*To be forwarded by Messrs. Ballantyne with care and speed.*)

MY DEAR SOPHIA,—Mama and I got your letter and are happy to think that our little people are all well and happy. In Lord Hailes' *Annals*² you will find a good deal about

¹ "Niall, king of Ireland in the 5th century, and known as Niall of the Nine Hostages." See note 2 U to *Rokeby*.

² Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes (1726-1792), Scottish judge. He was a prolific writer of translations, small tracts and short biographical sketches, most of his publications dealing with the early antiquities of Christianity or with the antiquities and history of Scotland. His most important work is *Annals of Scotland from the Accession of Malcolm III to the Accession of the House of Stewart. To which are added . . . several Texts relative to the History and Antiquities of Scotland.* 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1776-1779. The author intended to continue the *Annals* to the restoration of James I, "but there are various and invincible reasons which oblige him to terminate his work at the accession of the house of Stuart."

Melrose Abbey which you must fix in your recollection as we are now going to live so near it. It was founded by David the First one of the best of our Scottish Kings. We have had very cold weather here indeed but today it is more favourable. The snow and frost has prevented things getting on at Abbotsford so well as I could wish but a great deal has been done.

I expect to find that Walter has plied his lesson hard and given satisfaction to Mr. Brown and Anne and Charles are I dare [say] both very good children. You must kiss them all for me and pat up little Wallace. Finette has been lame but she is now quite well.

I beg you will remember me to Grandmama when you see her and also present my kind compliments and Mama's to Miss Millar. We are now at Mertoun but return to Ashestiel tomorrow and I think we shall be at home on Thursday or Friday so the Cook can have something ready for a beefstake or mutton chop in case we are past your dinner hour. Tell Walter I will not forget his great cannon and believe [me] my dear Sophia Your affectionate papa

WALTER SCOTT

MERTOUN HOUSE 19th April 1812.

[Law]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

DEAR SIR,—*Coute que coute* I will halt upon my arms till I see the Contents of that interesting box !

I am inexpressibly obliged to the politeness of Mr. Steele¹ and the many good offices you have done me, and good Friends you have gained me in Innisfail upon this occasion, dwell most warmly in my remembrance. I have been shaping a Tale of the Civil War, in which an

¹ Thomas Steele, one of the Irish literati who helped Scott with information for his *Swift*. In a letter of 24th November 1811 he reports the discovery of Swift's character of Sir William Temple. He still hopes to send a box of MSS.

Irishman makes a conspicuous character. I only hope I shall be able to express in it, my sense of the high qualities of a nature more nearly allied to my own, than the fire of the former, and prudence of the latter, is always willing to admit. An Irishman, to use a phrase of the Kitchen, with which I am just now much at home, for Old Macbeth Charlotte and I and the lame Dairy Maid are keeping house by ourselves, and all club their skill to make up the dinner, an Irishman then comes a little sooner to the boiling heat than we do, and we on the contrary smother in our caution not only the flash which offends, but the gleams that cheer and delight Society. We both endure hardships better than our imperial neighbours of England, but the Scotchman does it through hope of better, and the Irishman through a gay indifference, in which he has this great advantage, that as he hopes for nothing, he cannot be disappointed. I need not add that with all this national interest, I am delighted with every anecdote of Irish manners and antiquities. I delight in O'Neal of the nine hostages and all his paraphernalia of Wareries ¹ and Creaghts ² out of which more of the picturesque parts of Poetry may be wrought, than out of a dozen battles of Jena, Austerlitz. The *Edinr. Register* is shortly to be forthcoming, and I have long delayed writing to you because I expected to send you a proof sheet of the *Trumpet and Church Bell*,³ with which I have taken great liberties. You will find the Poem remains entirely yours in language and sentiment, but is considerably expanded, somewhat changed in arrangement, and a good deal chastized as to rhimes, in which you are not uniformly correct—which is not prudent, because it is a fault every Fool can discover.

¹ *F.L.* has this "warriors."

² In Irish history, a nomadic herd of cattle driven from place to place for pasture, or in time of war with the forces of their owners. The word often includes the herdsmen or drivers.

³ The verses as revised by Scott are in the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, vol. iii. pt. 2, p. xciii.

As the Poem stands there is not a line in it of which the germ did not exist in your hurried sketch, and I think tho' my part has only been that of the Painter or Plasterer to the Mansion already built, you will find it improved, and will not be displeased with me for putting your name in front of it.

The Acorns arrived safe, but I grieve to say the first parcel has been almost entirely eaten up by those foes to Forest ground the Mice. I have replanted the same spot with assistance of Mrs. Scott with my own fair hands. It is a peculiar place, and if the Acorns succeed, of which I have now little doubt, as the Mice have now so many other Modes of subsisting, I will name it after the Forest or after the Friend who showed me the Hibernian emblems of the golden age. I forget if we went down to Abbotsford when we were at Ashestiel together, but I rather think we did not, and consequently I would in vain attempt to give you the important information of the *how* and *where* these Tokens of your regard are deposited. You do not mention your Lawsuit in your late letters, I trust it is settled in some measure to your satisfaction. It will give you pleasure to know that my predecessor in office is now superannuated, upon a retiring allowance, leaving me in full possession of the official emoluments about £1300 a year which added to my own private funds makes me as rich as I can wish to be in any reason— The barbarity of Mr. Gassard's Cook-Maid, deserves the addition of another "God deliver us" to the Litany. An Eternal quarrel took place between two ancient Friends, both Antiquarians in this same Kingdom of Scotland ; The one had rather overburthened the other, who was his guest and Auditor, with the relation of some long essays, on the invasion of Agricola, state of Scotland under Malcolm Canmore, origin of the . . . Jurisdictions, and other topics more erudite than entertaining, when the impatient hearer, at length exclaimed, "Aye, aye, John this is all very well,

for you and me, but when we are dead and gone, these papers of yours will singe many a fat hen—" a speech which was never forgotten or forgiven, and which broke up a Friendship cemented by mutual studies and the intercourse of forty years— I can clear you up about the *black beard* of Astleys, which was a confusion between the adventures of *Teach*¹ the real *black beard* of the Buccaneers (whose scene of action lay in the West Indies, chiefly about the Bahama Islands, where he was at length surprized, and slain in a most desperate conflict with a King's Sloop of War, commanded by Capt. Maynard) and another Pirate of equal renown called Avery who for some time actually governed a settlement on the coast of Madagascar. Both of these Ruffians were in high renown during the reigns of Queen Anne, and George I. but altho' they both made much noise in the world, Teach the actual Blackbeard was by much the most extraordinary character, having studied to imitate the actions and even the outward appearance of an incarnate Fiend, he used during action to twist lighted Matches into the long black beard which afforded his agnomen, and once tried to make hell of his own by shutting down the hatches on himself and his comrades and maintaining a fumigation of brimstone till they were all ready to expire but himself. Many thanks for Dr. Byrom's epigrams,² that beginning God bless the King &c. I have seen I think at the bottom of a Punch bowl at a Jacobite relation's

¹ Edward Teach or Thatch (d. 1718), pirate, commonly known as Blackbeard. In the incident here referred to Captain Robert Maynard shot Teach dead. His "head was cut off, and—easy to be recognised by its abundant black beard—suspended from the end of the bowsprit. . . . Teach has long been received as the ideal pirate of fiction . . . nearly as many legends have been fathered on him as on William Kidd."—*D.N.B.* See Philip Gosse : *The Pirates' Who's Who*, 1924.

² John Byrom (1692-1763), poet and stenographer, was a strong Jacobite. He studied medicine at Montpellier, and returned to London to teach a new system of shorthand. He had an extraordinary facility for rhyming, but most of his verse is merely clever doggerel. With his friend Dr. Deacon he contributed various essays and epigrams to the *Chester Courant*, which were collected in a small volume, called *Manchester Vindicated*,

house, so it had become very popular— The Pastoral came safe, and is in Ballantyne's hands, who promises the utmost attention to your Volume. Charlotte begs her kind Compliments, and I wish much you would point me out any way, in which I could acknowledge better than by words the manifold favours your goodness has passed on Yrs Truly

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 20th April 1812.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO R. P. GILLIES¹

ASHESTIEL, 26th April, 1812

MY DEAR SIR,—Upon receiving your letter, the date of which ought to make me ashamed, I applied to John

Chester, 1749. One of his occasional poems, "Figg and Sutton," is turned to account by Thackeray in *The Virginians*, chap. xxxvii. The lines to which Scott alludes are :

God bless the king, God bless our faith's defender,
God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender ;
But who pretender is, and who is king,
God bless us all ! that's quite another thing.

His *Poems* have been edited by A. W. Ward, 4 vols., Chetham Socy., 1894-95. His diary is also interesting from his connection with William Law and others.

¹ Robert Pearce Gillies (1788-1858), a miscellaneous writer, began life as a man of means and proprietor. Admitted as an advocate in 1812, he lost most of his means by speculation. He had the advantage over Lockhart of knowing Scott at an earlier period, and his *Recollections of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.* (1837), give an interesting picture of the poet at the outset of his literary career and provide some details of his habits not recorded elsewhere. He formed an intimate friendship with Sir Egerton Brydges, a man of similar bibliographical tastes and somewhat the same overstrained sensibility. In later life, when the last of his resources disappeared, in the 1825 crash, he became editor of the new *Foreign Quarterly*, and Scott wrote various articles for him in the midst of his own heavy labours. Lockhart speaks of him with his usual bitterness, and Scott complains occasionally of his solicitations, but admits that he had been generous in the days of his own better fortunes. His best-known poem, "*Child Alarique, a Poet's Reverie, with Other Poems*," appeared in 1814. A MS. collection of his letters to Sir Egerton Brydges and to Lord Buchan is in existence, and his *Memoirs of a Literary Veteran* (1851), 3 vols., contains many details about these and other contemporary Scotsmen and men of letters.

Ballantyne for the account of Carey's Poems, but found it was set up for the Register. I dare say I shall find some other scrap for the "Bibliographer," although I shall hardly venture to enter into a personal correspondence with Sir S. E. Brydges, because I am certain, from a consciousness of my own infirmity in such cases, that I should let it drop awkwardly ; in which case, you know, it is better not commenced. Few people are worse at maintaining a literary correspondence than I am, for which I have only the apology which the Neapolitan lazarone pleaded when asked why he did not work instead of begging. "Did you but know," said he, in a most piteous tone of voice, "how lazy I am !"

This same vice of laziness has made your letter lie too long in my desk unanswered, and perhaps you will think I had better have let it so remain than take the privilege of an older man to give you a gentle scolding for some expressions in your last. In truth, it gives me great pain to think that a young gentleman at your time of life, with such favourable prospects, and a disposition so amiable, should give way to that state of depression which your letter announces.¹ Believe me, it is not right to do so, and it is very possible to avoid it. The fiend which haunts you is one who, if resisted, will flee from you. Plunge into active study, diversified by agreeable company, and regular exercise ; ride, walk, dance or shoot, or hunt, or break stones on the highway rather than despond about your health, which is the surest way in the world to bring about the catastrophe which you are apprehensive of. An untaught philosopher, my neighbour in this place, had the misfortune to lose an only son,

¹ Gillies had written on 24th March : "My childish anxiety about my health has been unconquerable of late ; which was the more excusable as my disorders were of that kind which threaten an utter extinction of the mental faculties, and mine are naturally weak." He then goes on to comment on the multiplicity of Scott's employments, "which would utterly overwhelm any other man. . . . Your characteristic facility and happiness of execution annihilate all difficulties. I frequently think of Chaucer, who was seldom absent from his public duties, and till he 'had made an end of his reckonings' never had any time for the pleasures of study."

at an age when the parent's heart is chiefly wrapt up in his offspring. He used always to be of my fishing parties, but within a day or two after the funeral, I was surprised at his joining me with his spear in his hand. "I see you are surprised," he said, with the tears in his eyes, "and undoubtedly I have sustained the severest wound which fate could have inflicted ; but were I to sit down to muse over it, my heart would break, or I should go mad, and I judge it more like a man who has duties left to perform, to resume my active occupations of business and of pastime." Go you, my dear sir, and do likewise. If you would not laugh at me, I would recommend to you to fall heartily in love with the best and prettiest girl in your neighbourhood.¹ The committing the power of teasing us to another, is very apt to prevent us from exercising that irritability of feeling upon ourselves.

I don't apologise for these observations because I am sure you will ascribe them to a sincere interest in your welfare. I trust your law-studies will bring you soon to town, when I shall have the pleasure to see you. Meanwhile, believe me, yours very faithfully,

W. S.

[*Gillies's Memoirs*]

[TO UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT]

SIR,—I am favoured with your letter and a copy of the spirited poem on the battle of Albuera.² While I express my thanks for the favourable opinion you have been pleased to form of my poetical attempts I am sure you will not

¹ "In so far as air & exercise are concerned, I can promise to live up to your injunctions. Laborious study & falling in Love are alas ! both equally out of the question."—R. P. GILLIES, 29th April.

² Albuera was celebrated by Scott in his *Vision of Don Roderick*. I have not been able to identify the name of the author of the "spirited" poem, but the B.M. catalogue has an entry thus : *The Battle of Albuera : a poem. With an epistle dedicatory to Lord Wellington [sic].* pp. 39. iv. Gale & Curtis : London, 1811. 8o.

suspect me of bandying compliments with you when I take the liberty of saying that a great subject has in the Author of *Albuera* met with a poet whose heart appears to have been deeply interested in the important conflict which he has described. This I assure you Sir is the highest compliment I can possibly offer thinking as I do of Lord Wellington and his campaigns of which I anticipated the success in opposition to a thousand sinister prophets so soon as our armies the first in the universe for valour were placed under the uncontrold direction of a General who I was aware from the character he had acquired in India would be satisfied with no half measures or imperfect success.

Wishing you Sir all leisure for the studies which you prosecute so successfully I am very sincerely Your obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 30 *April* [1812]

[*Henry Guppy*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

ABBOTSFORD, BY MELROSE, 3d *May* 1812

JUDGING my dearest friend of the distress in which you must have been involved by the late most unhappy incident¹ I have not ventured to interrupt it by any letter of mine sensible I could offer no consolation but that which is naturally derived from the lapse of time and the respect which we owe to the decrees of providence. Alas ! when I think of the inroads made by fate upon the social circle I met at the Priory some years ago and upon our mutual friends it seems like recollecting another world. To the two dear and valuable members of the family I may add that of Lord Melville your ardent and firm friend and of others with whom we are mutually connected.

¹ The death of Lord Abercorn's daughter, the Countess of Aberdeen.

Even the death of the Duchess of Gordon¹ though certainly a person not to be mentioned in the same breath with any of the others is a striking deprivation. She filled a certain place in Scottish society and will be missed both from the good and the harm which she did in it. My poor friend John Leyden too whose literary qualities the Marquis appreciated in spite of his outré manners has fallen a victim to his zeal for literature which has its martyrs as well as religion.

My own little matters being all settled I have been amusing myself with planting and decorating as well as I can the banks of the Tweed at Abbotsford which is the name of my own possession. Your Ladyship may believe that where no one else can see anything but fallow and broom and furze I am anticipating lawn and groves. This horrid weather however bids fair to baffle my hopes for one season at least. I am very apprehensive of the consequences of a scarcity at this moment especially from the multitude of French prisoners who are scattered through the small towns in this country, as I think very improvidently. As the peace of this county is intrusted to me I thought it necessary to state to the Justice Clerk that the arms of the local Militia were kept without any guard in a warehouse at Kelso that there was nothing to prevent the prisoners there at Selkirk and at Jedburgh from joining any one night and making themselves master of that dépôt—that the Sheriffs of Roxburgh and Selkirk in order to put down such a commotion, could only command about three troops of yeomanry to be collected from a great distance and these were to attack about 500 disciplined men who in the event supposed would be fully provided with arms and ammunition and might, if any alarm should occasion the small number of troops now at Berwick to be withdrawn make themselves masters

¹ Jane, Duchess of Gordon, known as "the beautiful Duchess of Gordon," died at Pulteney's Hotel, Piccadilly, London, on 14th April 1812, and was buried at Kinrora, Inverness-shire.

of that seaport the fortifications of which although ruinous would serve to defend them untill cannon was brought against them. A beautiful confusion this would make in the present unsettled state of the manufacturers in the north of England. Truly though not very ambitious of a hangman's office I think I could willingly do that good turn for some of the Orators of the London common hall, who are for the pleasure of hearing themselves talk doing incalculable mischief by inflaming the minds of the common people through the whole country.

Is not the change of parties like a dream? and did you ever see anything so like a game at commerce as the Opposition picking up the Princess of Wales so soon as they had lost the prince Regent. We addressed him on the 30th April at the Head Court where they put me in the Chair and made me draw the County Address.

I have nothing to add my dearest friend except that I long to have a line from you were it only to say how the Marquis is. I trust the late increase of Lord H.'s family has had some effect in alleviating his distress. God pity poor Lord Aberdn.—he has had a heavy blow. Ever,
Dear Lady Abercorn your truly faithful and respectful,
W. SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*Written at the end of Canto 1 of "Rokeby"*]

[*May-June 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—I send you the whole of the Canto. I wish Erskine and you would look it over together and consider whether upon the whole matter it is likely to make an impression. If it does really come to good I think there are no limits to the interest of that style of composition for the varieties of life and character are boundless. Yours truly,

W. S.

I dont know whether to give Matilda a mother or not. Decency requires she should have one but she is as likely to be in my way as the Gudemans mother according to the proverb is alway in that of the gudewife.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO J. B. S. MORRITT

MY DEAR MORRITT,—Nothing can exceed the tale of the silver Chalice.¹ I will maintain that in point of law the question it afforded was a prettier point to be mooted than the celebrated question of the black and white horses. What would the Civilians Benkerschorkius and Pagenstecherus have made of it if they had come to dispute whether *form* or *substance* should be the rule of classifying this renowned utensil. And if the schoolmen had got upon such a topic what a mist of metaphysics would the splendid Vase have been involved in. Truly Lucky Finlaysons apostrophe was but a faint and fleeting ejaculation compared to this knotty and doughty altercation. I hope the Lady will not prove so far dissatisfied with the fame of this luminous piece of household goods as to leave it at home and reconcile herself to more humble conveniences upon the next excursion. She cannot I fear hope to give any other implement the same celebrity which the beautiful Duchess of Hamilton conferrd upon a superb china punch-bowl long preserved at the Inn of Howgate near Edinr. and never produced by the Landlady Jenny Dods without narrating

¹ For Morritt's tale of Lady Holland's silver chalice (*i.e.* pot-de-chambre) and the debate as to who should clean it, the housemaid with the crockery or the under-butler who was responsible for the plate, see Partington, *op. cit.*, p. 181. Morritt's letter is dated April 1812. It contains his views on *Childe Harold*: "The beauties of the poetry are such as to put it quite out of the reach of ridicule, but a good sound flogging . . . would be of service to the indiscriminate readers of poetry, and perhaps to the noble author himself who seems at 23 to have collected most of the vices of 50."

the circumstance to which it owed its renown.¹ I would therefore have her abide by her Vessel of Potosi which I trust will yet afford us more sport. I would have it stolen and recovered and an objection taken to the indictment of the thief that the vessel he had abstracted was inaccurately described as a silver tankard. By the bye such pieces of plate seem to be singularly liable to occasion odd scrapes. There is a huge implement of this metal at Arniston not reserved for the commodity of any individual but usually brought in after dinner when there is a large company for the general use and benefit. It chanced one unlucky day that there was a good deal of singing after dinner which detained the ladies some time longer in the eating room than was usual. The bell was rung for some purpose or other when to the utter astonishment and confusion of all present the ancient Butler a man of a most reverend and dignified appearance having no doubt that it was the well-known signal stalkd into the room bearing in both hands this brilliant Heirloom equally remarkable for its huge size and its antique appearance which however admitted of no equivocation respecting its use. He had fairly marchd to the top of the room and placed his burden on its usual throne before he perceived his blunder. His exclamation of "God forgie me" his hasty retreat shrouding with a napkin the late object of his solemn entry and the confusion of the good company may be more easily conceived than described. This story the Chief Baron tells with great humour.

I agree very much in what you say of Child Harold. Though there is something provoking and insulting both to morality and to feeling in his misanthropical ennui it gives nevertheless an odd poignancy to his descriptions and reflections and upon the whole it is a poem of most

¹ Scott borrowed the name of Meg Dods in *St. Ronan's Well* from this Jenny Dods, at whose inn at Howgate, on the Peebles road, with Will Clerk, John Irving, and George Abercromby, he spent a night during a fishing excursion in their student days.

extraordinary power and may rank its author with our first poets. I see the Edinr. Review has hauled its wind which I suppose is as much owing to Lord Byrons political conversion as to their conviction of his increasing powers.

What say you of Lord Wellington. If these *fainéants* who have been the bane of the Spanish cause do not prevent its success I think nothing else ultimately will prevail against it.

As for the house and the poem there are twelve masons hammering at the one and one poor noddle at the other so they are both in progress.

Charlotte begs her kindest respects to Mrs. Morritt and hoping to hear from you soon I am ever truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD NEAR MELROSE.

We hover between this place and Ashestiel but leave the latter this month for good. Edinr. is always my best address.

4 May 1812.

[Law]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

ASHESTIEL 4 May 1812

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—I have been much longer than I could have thought possible in answering your kind letter and thanking you for all the information it contained. I am truly glad that you are employing yourself with your usual perseverance and spirit in collecting and recording the decaying traditions of your country. The Highland usages and manners have had this very remarkable and uncommon fate—that they have subsisted to a very late period in a state of extreme simplicity although the districts which they influenced make but an inconsiderable part of the empire they belong to—and then that they have not been utterly abolishd or forgotten untill a rational spirit of curiosity concerning them has

been excited among those who have the best opportunity of gratifying it by the necessary enquiries. I wish a work could be compiled from good authorities comprehending 1st A general view of the Patriarchal government both with respect to the internal and external relations of the Chiefs to their own Clans and to others, their laws and customs and the regulations by which they maintained and transmitted their influence. 2dly An account of the principal Clans with the territories occupied by each their genealogies real and traditional their engagements with each other and the change of property and possessions which took place in consequence—3rdly the general history of the Highlanders and Islanders with reference to the lowlands to Ireland to England and to other countries. 4thly the domestic customs of this singular people and all that could illustrate their manners and habits of thinking. 5thly Their legends comprehending an account of their poetry and music and such specimens of both as could be collected in a genuine state. Were I as young and indefatigable as when I collected the Border legends and had as little to occupy me I would study the Gaelic with a view of spending two or three summers at least forming some poetical collections towards such a work. I humbly wish that some vigorous and active minded man would take it up. I would be apt to prefer a Lowlander as I am a little jealous of the partialities of the Highland clans.

Meanwhile I am hammering my brains upon an odd subject. I will not tell it to you because I may possibly fling it all into the fire but it is a romantic subject and I think nearer that of Marmion than any of the other attempts I have made. But my cottage is rising and the fates will have it so that like Vanburghs house it must rise to the clinking of noise. All our children are thank God now quite strong again and Walter begins once more to look like the laird of Gilnockie after the rude shaking which the measles gave him.

In the meanwhile Charlotte and I are here by ourselves providing for our final removal from this place at Whitsunday to Abbotsford where I intend to occupy a very small farm house on the premises till the Muse and the Masons have made me a larger. Our family will somewhat resemble the poor Lady whom her papa describes as cramd into a sedan chair where

She sate like a pistol half out of the holster etc.

Or rather inclined like an obstinate bolster

Which I think I have seen you attempting, my dear,

In vain to cram into a small pillow [case].

Wherever we are we shall always think of Mrs. Clephane Miss Jane Anne and you with much sincere regard.

I will write Mrs. C. at length one of these days. Mrs. Scott joins in kind respects, and I am your very faithful but having wrought all day in the open air your very sleepy humble servant.

WALTER SCOTT

[*Northampton*]

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUGH

I AM duly honord with your Graces two letters and I trust you will believe me not a little flatterd by their contents. The Draft for £10,, 10,, I will transmit to the Ettricke bard so soon as I reach Edinr. and I am afraid it will be with him as with Bayes's army who exclaimd on a similar donation—"We have not seen so much the Lord knows when"—But I trust his gratitude will be equal to your kindness & munificence.

Your Grace does me but justice in supposing how deeply I was interested in the dreadful misfortune at Ditton.¹ But in lamenting so many things which money cannot repair and especially the curious old library which

¹ In her first letter of 20th April the Duchess is glad of an opportunity to show her "good will to poor Mr. Hogg." In the second (2nd May) she encloses a draft for ten guineas and mentions that a "dreadful fire at Ditton Park [near Windsor] has entirely consumed the House & most of its contents but thank God . . . Lord & Ldy Montagu & the children are well."

I had so often wishd to rummage we must not forget the consolatory view of the disaster but be thankful that consequences more melancholy and equally irretrievable have not taken place. I can easily conceive its effects on the Duchess Dowager but I trust they will be transient since the shock must arise more from the feeling of what might have been than of what actually happend. If your Grace will suppose me chatting to you I will tell you of a letter, that is the contents of one, which my mother used to inculcate upon us when in the nursery as containing a sovereign antidote in cases like that of Ditton. While she was residing with an uncle on the Sea coast of East Lothian a small brig, ship & cargo the property of the Master who saild her, chanced to be stranded near their place of residence in a stormy winter night. The Master and crew were with difficulty saved from the wreck which shortly after in the sea-phrase parted and was totally lost. The sailors were brought to my uncles house as the nearest place of hospitable refuge but the Master refused even to taste food or approach a fire till he had given his wife an account of his disaster in these words which he gave to my relative in an unseald billet. "Dear Annie—The Lovely Peggy (*i.e. his ship*) is no more—But let not your heart be cast down for the loss of world's gear (*worldly wealth*) while I am Adam Greig"—The poor fellow was sensible (and truly doubtless)¹ that all could be replaced to his wife and family while he was well and able to exert himself to repair his loss. Will your Grace have the goodness to offer my most respectful remembrances to Lord & Lady Montagu & assure them that no one can show more sincerity in their weal & misfortune.

There has been dreadful weather till today. The snow lay thick both on the hills & fields here yesterday & continued falling thick and fast the whole day with a north east wind which might boast some six weeks duration. All of a sudden we have this morning wakend

¹ I have supplied the brackets lest the sense be unduly obscure.

in absolute summer greatly to the refreshment of the young lambs and grass & corn not forgetting my young trees & shrubs at Abbotsford.

There are no news in the Forest unless a report that the Duke takes Newark into his own hand as the phrase is which if it prove true will make Bowhill one of the finest highland places in Scotland. Moreover it is reported that the Sheriff has stolen some holly plants out of the Peel wood near Ashestiel but this wants confirmation.

I beg my respectful Compliments to the Duke who has lately lost a valuable friend in Mark Pringle. But thus our lives glide on losing those we love & esteem in our youth & turning with additional hope towards the rising generation. I trust my little gallant namesake who always acknowledges me so kindly is now quite stout & that I shall see him in the Forest sometime this ensuing season. Will your Grace have the goodness to make my respects to Lady Douglas whom of late I have seen so much less than I wish & I trust your Grace will believe me with great respect and sincere attachment Your obliged & Honourd humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 8 May 1812

[*Buccleuch*]

TO R. P. GILLIES

EDINBURGH, 12th May 1812

MY DEAR SIR,—I am greatly to blame for not sooner acknowledging the receipt of your letter with the verses,¹ which I think very pretty ; indeed, I have little doubt that by giving your mind occasionally to literary and poetical composition, you will alleviate, and in time conquer the nervous feelings which you entertain, and which are really to be conquered by exertion, and by exertion alone. My present situation is a very hurried one, as I am on the point of leaving Ashestiel, long my

¹ Gillies had sent nine stanzas with his letter of 29th April. His lines contain references to some of Scott's poems.

summer cabin, and occupying a very small tenement upon my late purchase of Abbotsford, until leisure, which the learned define as implying time and money, will permit me to begin a more convenient one. Meanwhile, the change, though not much more important than from the brown room to the green, as was the Vicar of Wakefield's great revolution, fails not to require some superintendence and to make a great deal of bustle. So this must be my excuse for not writing to Sir Egerton Brydges at present, with whose domestic calamity I sincerely sympathise. I have the clamour of about twenty people, with twenty different demands, all of the most trifling nature, still stunning my ears ; and I begin to think that what the Scotch call a *flitting* may be so effectual a mode for giving scope for your exertion, and exercise for your patience as any of the prescriptions I formerly took the freedom to send you. I return to all this confusion in the course of this week or the next, when I hope to end it.

I should have liked to have said more about your verses, which I really think very elegant. I am sorry the conclusion has a melancholy turn, and I must beg you, my dear young friend, for the sake of all that is dear to you, to recollect that active exertion is peremptorily imposed upon us as a law of our nature ; and as the price of that degree of happiness, which our present state of existence admits of. You see the rich and the proud reduced to purchase contentment, and their night's rest by the hardest bodily labour. Those to whom nature has kindly indulged the power of literary labour, occupying the higher, instead of their mere corporeal functions, ought not surely to be less active in their pursuits than mere fishers or fox-hunters. Crabbe says somewhere, "As labour lets, we live." It is really the charter by which we hold existence, and be it in picking straws, or legislating for empires, we must labour or die of *ennui*. I hope, therefore, to hear that you are forming some literary plan, with the determination of carrying it through, and

depend upon it, you will learn to defy the foul fiend. I have got a present of a handsome little copy of Douce's unique romance of Vergilius. Do you know who edited it? Yours ever, W. S.

I have managed this so awkwardly that it will cost you double postage, M.P.s being now scarce here. What do you think of trying your hand on a dilettante edition of something that is rare and curious?

[*Gillies's Memoirs*]

TO MR. BLACKWOOD BOOKSELLER 64 SOUTH BRIDGE
EDINBURGH ¹

DEAR SIR,—I am greatly obliged to you for your attention in forwarding your curious and interesting catalogue. I am here ruining myself with planting and building so that adding to my library is in fact burning the candle at both ends. But I am somewhat comforted by observing that the increased value of books has very nearly doubled the prime cost of my little collection and proved me a wise man when I had much reason to account myself a fool. I therefore subjoin an order for some articles to which I may probably make additions on coming to Edinr. for few people except princes can afford to marry or buy books without making their own eyes the arbiter of the bargain.

I am with best thanks for your attention Dear Sir
yours very faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 21 May 1812

[*Blackwood*]

¹ The list of books is given on the verso of the page in the copy of this letter and includes: *Walters Independency*, *Life of Lovat*, *Rob Roy*, *Remarks on Orrery's Swift*, *Loyal Garland*, *Porteous Life*, *Agrippes Occult Philosophy*, *Magicians*, *Witches*, *Cellini's Life*, *Tale of a Tub reversed*, *Hind Let Loose*, and other works in Latin and Italian. At the bottom of the list is written—

"Given under my hand this day of my flitting from Ashestiel."

TO LADY ALVANLEY ¹

ASHESTIEL, 25th May 1812

I WAS honoured, my dear Lady Alvanley, by the kind letter which you sent me with our friend Miss Smith, whose talents are, I hope, receiving at Edinburgh the full meed of honourable applause which they so highly merit. It is very much against my will that I am forced to speak of them by report alone, for this being the term of removing, I am under the necessity of being at this farm to superintend the transference of my goods and chattels, a most miscellaneous collection, to a small property, about five miles down the Tweed, which I purchased last year. The neighbours have been much delighted with the procession of my furniture, in which old swords, bows, targets, and lances, made a very conspicuous show. A family of turkeys was accommodated within the helmet of some *preux* chevalier of ancient Border fame; and the very cows, for aught I know, were bearing banners and muskets. I assure your ladyship that this caravan, attended by a dozen of ragged rosy peasant children, carrying fishing-rods and spears, and leading poney, greyhounds, and spaniels, would, as it crossed the Tweed, have furnished no bad subject for the pencil, and really reminded me of one of the gypsey groupes of Callot ² upon their march.

[*Lockhart*]

¹ "Among the many amiable English friends whom he owed to his frequent visits at Rokeby Park there was, I believe, none that had a higher place in his regard than the late Anne Lady Alvanley, the widow of the celebrated Chief-Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He was fond of female society in general; but her Ladyship was a woman after his heart; well born and highly bred, but without the slightest tinge of the frivolities of modern fashion; soundly informed, and a warm lover of literature and the arts, but holding in as great horror as himself the imbecile chatter and affected ecstasies of the bluestocking generation. Her ladyship had written to him early in May by Miss Sarah Smith (now Mrs. Bartley) whom I have already mentioned as one of his theatrical favourites."—LOCKHART.

² Jacques Callot (1594-1635), engraver. His most celebrated engravings are "Miseries of War" and "Gypsies." See vol. i. Appendix, note, p. 478.

TO LADY ALVANLEY

EDINBURGH, 28th May [1812]

I HAVE got here at length, and had the pleasure to hear Miss Smith speak the Ode on the Passions charmingly last night. It was her benefit, and the house was tolerable, though not so good as she deserves, being a very good girl, as well as an excellent performer.

I have read Lord Byron with great pleasure, though pleasure is not quite the appropriate word. I should say admiration—mixed with regret that the author should have adopted such an unamiable misanthropical tone.—The reconciliation with Holland-House is extremely edifying, and may teach young authors to be in no hurry to exercise their satirical vein. I remember an honest old Presbyterian, who thought it right to speak with respect even of the devil himself, since no one knew in what corner he might one day want a friend. But Lord Byron is young, and certainly has great genius, and has both time and capacity to make amends for his errors. I wonder if he will pardon the Edinburgh reviewers, who have read their recantation of their former strictures.

Mrs. Scott begs to offer her kindest and most respectful compliments to your ladyship and the young ladies. I hope we shall get into Yorkshire this season to see Morritt : he and his lady are really delightful persons. Believe me, with great respect, dear Lady Alvanley, your much honoured and obliged

WALTER SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO LORD MELVILLE

MY DEAR LORD,—If you have any influence with the Lord Chamberlain may I intreat you to exert it in favour of Robert Southey who is candidate for the situation of

Royal Historiographer vacant by Duten's death. He is a man of so much talent and such excellent dispositions both personal and political that an office which is one of the few destined for the reward of literary merit could be no where so well bestowed to which I have only to add that his family is large & his circumstances limited.

In early youth he was led astray by the first dawns of French revolutionary principles but has since made ample amends for which I refer your Lordship to the Historical part of the last Edinburgh Register.

I write all this in hopes that the Lord Chamberlain may be permanent amidst all this threatend fluctuation. Your cool head and firm heart, if I can trust report, would have brought about a very different conclusion from what we have now to expect if *expectation* be a proper phrase where there is nothing but *fear*. Mean while the Devil is as busy in the country as in 1794.

The Manchester Committee correspond and levy money all thro Scotland. I recoverd a great bunch of their papers in the course of investigating a threatend disturbance at Galashiels.

I have only to add that Lord Lonsdale befreinds Southey on this occasion¹ and that if it be in your Lordships power to back his application. Excuse the liberty I use in intruding upon your Lordship in this business but I really have it much at heart and I am confident it will be most creditable to every person who has it in their power to forward it. Believe with great respect & regard Ever your Lordships truly obliged and faithful

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 4 June [1812]—a melancholy birthday.

[*Nat. Lib. Scot.*]

¹ Southey's letter of 30th May says that Croker's application for the post has been favourably received. He [Southey] has written to Lonsdale and Canning.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

EDINBURGH, 4th June 1812.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,—It is scarcely necessary to say that the instant I had your letter I wrote to the only friend I have in power, Lord Melville (if indeed he be now in power), begging him for the sake of his own character, for the remembrance of his father who wished you sincerely well, and by every other obijuration I could think of, to back your application.¹ All I fear, if Administration remain, is the influence of the clergy, who have a strange disposition to job away among themselves the rewards of literature. But I fear they are all to pieces above stairs, and much owing to rashness and mismanagement ; for if they could not go on without Canning and Wellesley, they certainly should from the beginning have invited them in as companions, and not mere retainers. On the whole, that cursed compound of madness and villany has contrived to do his country more mischief at one blow than all her sages and statesmen will be able to repair perhaps in our day. You are quite right in apprehending a *Jacquerie* ; the country is mined below our feet.² Last week, learning that a meeting was to be held among the weavers of the large manufacturing village of Galashiels, for the purpose of cutting a man's web from his loom, I apprehended the ringleaders and disconcerted the whole project ; but in the course of my inquiries, imagine my

¹ For the post of Historiographer-Royal in place of Mr. Dutens, just dead ; but the appointment was made with remarkable haste, being given to Dr. Stanier Clarke, librarian to the Prince Regent. On this point the *D.N.B.* is erroneous in stating that it was Clarke's *Life of King James II* which made the Prince give him the title of Historiographer. Clarke's work was not published till 1816. "It turned out ultimately that there was no salary attached to the office, the appointment being merely honorary."—*Southey's Life and Correspondence*, vol. iii. p. 333.

² "Both poets regarded with much alarm the symptoms of popular discontent which appeared in various districts . . . during the uncertain condition of public affairs consequent on the assassination of the Prime Minister, Mr. Percival, by Bellingham, in the lobby of the House of Commons, on the 11th of May 1812."—LOCKHART.

surprise at discovering a bundle of letters and printed manifestoes, from which it appeared that the Manchester Weavers' Committee corresponds with every manufacturing town in the South and West of Scotland, and levies a subsidy of 2s. 6d. per man—(an immense sum)—for the ostensible purpose of petitioning Parliament for redress of grievances, but doubtless to sustain them in their revolutionary movements. An energetic administration, which had the confidence of the country, would soon check all this ; but it is our misfortune to lose the pilot when the ship is on the breakers. But it is sickening to think of our situation.

I can hardly think there could have been any serious intention of taking the hint of the Review, and yet *liberty* has so often been made the pretext of crushing its own best supporters, that I am always prepared to expect the most tyrannical proceedings from professed demagogues.

I am uncertain whether the Chamberlain will be liable to removal—if not, I should hope you may be pretty sure of your object.¹ Believe me ever yours faithfully,

WALTER SCOTT

4th June.—What a different birthday from those I have seen ! It is likely I shall go to Rokeby for a few days this summer ; and if so, I will certainly diverge to spend a day at Keswick.

[*Lockhart*]

¹ Southey replied on 10th June : “ Had I succeeded in this quest I meant to have proposed to Ballantyne to write the history of the Spanish Revolution. . . . The prospect however may now take its way ‘ o’er the backside of the world ’ into that Paradise where a good many of my projects have gone before it.” He then proceeds to say he would now like to be made Governor of Botany Bay, but that, owing to Mrs. Southey’s objections, “ the honour of crossing the Blue Mountains must be reserved for some more fortunate person.” The last sentence of Scott’s letter refers to “ a hint dropped in the Edinburgh Review, that the author of the historical department of the Edinburgh Annual Register ought to be called to the bar of the House of Commons, in consequence of the bold language in which he had criticised the parliamentary hostility of the Whigs to the cause of Spain.”—LOCKHART.

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

MY DEAR MISS BAILLIE—Agreeably to your kind permission I have given Mr. Terry these credentials to wait upon you which I know he will consider as a very high honor. He studies his art with more attention to the metaphysical principles on which it is founded than any person of his profession I have ever met with. We are all agape here for the issue of these extraordinary vacillations among political persons and parties. They put me in mind of a set of restive horses turn'd to grass who cannot be catch'd even by the assistance of the corn-measure

O for stern Cromwell from the dead
Or bluff old Hall to raise his head.

These times and these spirits require a decision in the Executive government which I fear they will hardly find.

I intend a long letter one of these days so I will conclude for the present with best compliments to Miss A. Baillie. I am ever with sincere respect Yours very faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 9th June 1812.

[*Scott Baillie and Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO DANIEL TERRY

EDINBURGH, 9th June 1812

MY DEAR TERRY,—I wish you joy of your success, which, although all reports state it as most highly flattering, does not exceed what I had hoped for you. I think I shall do you a sensible pleasure in requesting that you will take a walk over the fields to Hampstead one of these fine days, and deliver the enclosed to my friend Miss Baillie, with whom, I flatter myself, you will be much pleased, as she has all the simplicity of real genius. I mentioned to her some time ago, that I wished to make you acquainted, so that the sooner you can call upon her,

the compliment will be the more gracious. As I suppose you will sometimes look in at the Roxburghe sale, a memorandum respecting any remarkable articles will be a great favour.

Abbotsford was looking charming, when I was obliged to mount my wheel in this court, too fortunate that I have at length some share in the roast meat I am daily engaged in turning. Our flitting and removal from Ashestiel baffled all description ; we had twenty-four cart-loads of the veriest trash in nature, besides dogs, pigs, poneys, poultry, cows, calves, bare-headed wenches, and bare-breeched boys. In other respects we are going on in the old way, only poor Percy is dead. I intend to have an old stone set up by his grave, with "*Cy gist li preux Percie*," and I hope future antiquaries will debate which hero of the house of Northumberland has left his bones in Teviotdale.¹ Believe me yours very truly

WALTER SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR SHARPE,—The inimitable drawing of Mickle-mouthed Meg has arrived safe. *Ah che cara cosa*. I think it is quite perfect—the rueful helpless resignation of the hero, the exhortations of the priest, who obviously feels the drollery of the dilemma, the sly look of the mother, the glee of the poor damsel, and the determined obstinate attitude of the baronial papa, are all most exquisitely embodied. It is now in the hands of Marnock, that it may go with me to Abbotsford, of which it will be a principal ornament. I will not offer any thanks, because it is better to acknowledge bankruptcy at once, than to

¹ "The epitaph of this favourite greyhound may be seen on the edge of the bank, a little way below the house of Abbotsford." This letter answers one "mentioning the approach of the celebrated sale of books in which the Roxburghe Club originated."—LOCKHART.

pay a debt of gratitude at the rate of a penny in the pound. I forwarded the parcel to Mr. Hay, and the book was most welcome. I am sorry for the trouble you have had about the Dean's letters, but much obliged by your persevering kindness. Would to God I had shaken hands with the Dean, which would end my labours of editorship, unless where little antiquarian tit-bits were to be cooked up !

The Duchess of Gordon's panegyrist is surely too absurd a fellow to be identified with Playfair.¹ If I could suppose he had written the paragraph, I must conclude that the fickleness of cousin Ap Reece, now Lady Davy, had turned his brain. The fair Fidele with a pize to her !—'twas as rampant a brimstone as ever came out of Billingsgate, whose sole claim to wit rested upon her brazen impudence and disregard to the feelings of all who were near her. I should suppose some country minister, or the led surgeon of the family, had squirted out the piece of absurdity you have noticed.

¹ "As to the epistles," Sharpe had written on 10th June, "which were said to be in the possession of the Duke of Beaufort, I found a letter awaiting me here [Hoddam Castle] from Lord Worcester, disclaiming all knowledge of any such MSS." The postscript runs : "I hear that the Duchess of Gordon's body, after her decease, was shown at the hotel, at a shilling a head, and that the flourish concerning her in the newspapers was written by Professor Playfair. He stiles her 'the fair Fidele !'—'there are fairer things than Polecats, sure.'"

In replying to Scott's letter Sharpe, referring to Thomson's Chronicle, which he hopes to see, writes : "The murders in the Douglas family render K. James the second's reign excessively interesting, particularly the first crime. 'Edinburgh Castle, town, and tower, God grant ye sink for sin.' What sad dogs, however, those Douglasses in general were, even by the account of their own friends. Did you remark how much of their noble origin Mr. Chalmers docks off in his Caledonia ?" . . . "I remember Lord Hailes's note respecting the Kirkpatricks rather imperfectly. . . . My Lord was a strange historian tho in this case he really may be right, as the fixing of the stab upon Closeburne is merely through tradition authorised strongly by the crest and motto of the family." The crest of the Kirkpatricks is "Mak Siccar," always referred to in the story of the murder of the Red Comyn. See *Tales of a Grandfather*, c. viii, and for the battle of Dryfe Sands the introduction to Lord Maxwell's Good-night in the *Border Minstrelsy*. A feud renewed between the Johnstones and Maxwells, supported on both sides by the chief Border families, led to this battle, in which the Maxwells were defeated and Maxwell was slain.

A very different specimen of our Scottish matronage, your friend Lady Stafford, is in town just now, but I have not seen her as yet.

I will overhaul Ballantyne's books, but I cannot immediately guess what one you mean with plates in the French style. They have some neat little articles at present.

I have got from Thos. Thomson a very old and curious brief Chronicle of the reign of James II. It overturns many facts in our received history, and throws much light upon that obscure period. Thomson intends to throw off a few copies for private friends, and I will endeavour to get you one, or have mine copied for you.¹ Are you aware that Lord Hailes challenges the slayer of the Red Cuming as not being the Chief of Closeburn? I think, however, upon very feeble grounds.

I have lately recovered a curious document, being the King's declaration to Parliamt. after the fall of the Douglasses. "Anent the coming of the Laird of Buccleuch to Melrose." The object is to exculpate the Laird from having any treasonable intentions, in token of which the King, with laudable minuteness, informs us that he had "bot on ane ledderin doublet, with ane black bonnet upon his head." When you are hunting after Border anecdotes, perhaps you may pick up something anent the battle of Dryfe Sands and the death of Maxwell. I have heard it reported that the lady of Lockerby knocked him on the head like a second Jael, and that the weapon she used was the large key of the Castle, for, having sent out all her servants, either to assist Johnstone or to procure intelligence, she at length sallied out herself, locked the iron gate, and carried this unlucky key in her hand when she encountered Maxwell, whose horse had thrown him in the retreat, after he had lost a hand in the

¹ *Short Memorial of the Scottis Corniklis; and a Short Chronicle of the Reign of James II. from 1436 to 1460, &c.* Edited by Thomas Thomson, Esq. 4to. Edin. See *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 3.

battle. I think it is not altogether out of the dice that I may see you in Dumfriesshire this year ; for as I intend to be in Cumberland, I shall be at no great distance from you. I should like to see Carlaverock and Lochmaben, but above all to see you in your land. But all this is hypothetical.—Believe me, ever most gratefully yours,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR., 18th June 1812.

[*Sharpe's Letters*]

TO MISS C. RUTHERFORD

[*Summer 1812 ?*]

MY DEAR MISS CHRITTY,—Our wise heads have just been making out a plan for Jane & you which will cost you a shilling sterling paid unto the bearer hereof over & above the usual carriage of a parcel. The Children left us this morning and we are particularly & anxiously desirous that Jane & you will condescend to occupy their empty cribs (for this is a sort of poultry house) untill the 10 or 11th when we will return bodily together—You cannot guess how anxious I am to shew you what I have been doing in this little handkerchief of a place—not to mention the part of Rokeby which is finishd¹ & twenty other As's of great weight as Hamlet says—

Peter proposed returning on Saturday but will wait your commands till Sunday if you find that most convenient—only I hope you will start soon enough to dine here that day because you will meet the counsellor—On Monday he & I go to the Election to return on Tuesday to breakfast—

The weather seems looking up to be very fine so pray start gallantly to your feet put your clothes in a trunk

¹ *Rokeby* was commenced at the end of 1811, so that this reference probably places the date of the letter in 1812.

and betake yourselves to Gala water with all speed—You can visit Ashestiel, your Haining¹ &c &c making this always your night quarters—

I am reduced to this very sudden an[d] unceremonious mode of solicitation by finding that I am not to be overwhelmed at the Election in the way I had reason to expect—so finding we had a little room on whom should we bestow it if you will be kind enough to take possession—Charlotte begs me to add pray do come—Have the goodness to send the inclosed to Peter with your own orders. Ever yours affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, *Thursday*—

I send the inclosed as a compensation for your shilling.
[*Miss Mary Lockhart*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—I received your letter yesterday and have given my most anxious consideration to the subject extremely anxious to be of some service to Mrs. Clephane if I possibly could. You are aware of the total difference between the laws of England and Scotland and it is therefore impossible for me to form any professional opinion on the subject without the certainty of leading you into error. I should think it most extraordinary however if there were not some redress for so gross a grievance and am chiefly afraid that by submitting to it for such a length of time Mrs. Clephane may have injured her own cause. There is also a great difficulty in Mrs. Clephanes writing upon such a subject either to the Lady M. Adam or the Landlord ; for it would be scarcely possible to frame a letter without dropping some expression of which advantage might be afterwards taken. Besides in writing a letter and making an offer

¹ The Haining, near Selkirk, was the house of the Pringles and passed into the possession of the late Professor Pringle Pattison.

you place yourself always at the mercy of the person receiving it who may reply to it or no as he thinks fit while every months delay is increasing your expense and embarrassment. In such circumstances there seems to me but one thing to be done and that is to put the whole matter into the hands of some professional man in London of diligence and character giving him *charte blanche* to make a settlement for you if he can get one on tolerable terms and directing him to consult you if exorbitant demands are insisted on. Such a person can see and speak to the various parties concerned without committing himself till he see his way clear before him : he can beat the demands down and hold either conciliatory or threatening language according to the impression which either is most likely to make. One of our Scotch Solicitors Alex. Mundell¹ Parliament Street or John Richardson Fludjer Street Westminster would be perhaps the fittest person to entrust with such a negotiation. I would rather recommend the last because being younger and less wealthy he might have less hesitation to take the management of what I suspect does not precisely fall within the line of their profession. Both are men of high character for honour and integrity and perfectly known to me. Such a person would I think be able to bring the matter to an issue upon much better terms than can ever be gained by correspondence where the distance is so great. Should Mrs. Clephane resolve upon employing either of these gentlemen I am sure I need not say that she is at perfect liberty to make any use of my name to them or I will write myself if you will let me know when you have made your option. It is possible Mrs. Clephane may have some confidential attorney in London with whom the trust may be better reposed than with either. This will be so much the better because they who know you will be easily interested. I fear Mrs. Clephane has no evidence verbal or written of the Lady's unprincipled

¹ Letter to Mundell, p. 19.

declaration that she was not to be liable for repairs. Could any evidence be produced of her Ladyship having said so I should suppose it would be easy to leave that part of the burden at her Ladyships door. This is the best advice that I can think of after turning the matter in every way in my mind. It is impossible to settle such a perplexed business depending upon the temper and views of so many parties without being on the spot and as Mrs. Clephane is not and cannot be there herself she must trust to the judgement of somebody to hold her cards and play her hand. Pray let me know if I can be in any way further useful in this matter : it is a case in which my wish to be of service greatly exceeds I fear my capacity of being so.

I am delighted to hear you are to be in Edinr. and I hope you will be nearer us than last time.

Charlotte is at present in the country and I am going there tomorrow to fit up our little temporary barracks. I must return however on Wednesday till the 12 July finally ends our court duty for four months. But direct to Edinr. as my letters are regularly forwarded and the general direction prevents mistakes.

I almost forgot to say that the plan of writing to Mr. Jeffrey will not answer : the matter is quite out of his professional line. I beg my kindest Compliments to Mrs. & Miss Clephane and am ever very faithfully your very respectful and affectionate friend

EDINBURGH 26 *June* 1812.

WALTER SCOTT

[*Northampton*]

TO JOHN MURRAY

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been very silent partly through the pressure of business and partly from idleness and procrastination but it would be very ungracious to delay returning my thanks for your kindness in transmitting

the very flattering particulars of the Prince Regent's conversation with Lord Byron.¹ I trouble you with a few lines to his Lordship expressive of my thanks for his very handsome & gratifying communication and I hope he will not consider it as intrusive in a veteran author to pay my debt of gratitude for the high pleasure I have received from the perusal of *Childe Harold*, which is certainly the most original poem which we have had this many a day. I owe you best thanks not only for that but for the *Calamities of Authors*² which has all the entertaining and lively features of the *Curiosities of literature*. I am just packing them up with a few other books for my hermitage at Abbotsford where my present parlour is only twelve foot square & my book press in liliputian proportion. Poor Andw. Macdonald³ I knew in days of yore & could

¹ The following was Murray's report of Byron's conversation with the Prince Regent in his letter of 27th June: "It was at an evening party at Miss Johnsons . . . for more than half an hour H.R.H. conversed upon Poetry & Poets, with which he displayed an intimacy & critical taste which at once surprised & delighted Lord B—but the Prince's great delight was the writings of Walter Scott whose name & writings he dwelt upon & recurred to incessantly. He preferred him far beyond every other poet of his time, repeated several passages with fervor & with criticism. He spoke mostly of the Lay of the Last Minstrel which he expressed himself as admiring most of the *three*. He . . . appeared, as Lord B supposes, to have read more poetry than any prince in Europe. He paid, of course, many high compliments to Lord B—but the greatest was—that he ought to be offended with Lord B for that he had thought it impossible for any poet to write like Walter Scott, & that he had made him find himself mistaken.' Lord B. called upon me merely to tell me the raptures of the Prince respecting you, thinking . . . that it might not be ungrateful for you to hear." —*Walpole Collection*.

² *Calamities of Authors*; including some Inquiries respecting their moral and literary characters. By the Author of "*Curiosities of Literature*" [Isaac D'Israeli], 2 vols. London, 1812. Murray wished Scott to review it.

³ Andrew Macdonald (1755?-1790), dramatist and verse-writer. He received deacon's orders in the Scottish Episcopal Church in 1775. Though a good preacher, he never attained success. Eventually he settled in Edinburgh as a literary man and ultimately tried his fortune in London, where his tragedy, "*Vimonda*," with a prologue by Henry Mackenzie, was produced by Colman at the Haymarket on 5th September 1787. "Adopting the pseudonym of 'Matthew Bramble,' he amused London with many poetical burlesques, cleverly modelled on 'Peter Pindar.'" (Cf. D'Israeli, *Calamities of Authors*.)

have supplied some curious anecdotes respecting him—he died of a poet's consumption vizt. want of food.

The present volume of Somers will be out immediatly with whom am I to correspond on this subject since the secession of Will: Miller¹: I shall be happy to hear you have succeeded to him in this department as well as in Albemarle Street. What has moved Miller to retire—he is surely too young to have made a fortune & it is uncommon to quit a thriving trade. I have had a packet half finished for Gifford this many a day. I inclose a note for Heber and another for Thos. Park as I shall put the whole under an omnipotent frank will you let your clerk throw them into the post office. I am Dear Sir your obliged humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 2 July [1812]

[John Murray]

TO LORD BYRON²

EDINBURGH, July 3d, 1812

MY LORD,—I am uncertain if I ought to profit by the apology which is afforded me, by a very obliging communication from our acquaintance, John Murray of Fleet

¹ William Miller (1769-1844), publisher. "In 1804 Miller removed to a larger house in Albemarle Street, where he continued until his retirement from business in 1812, being succeeded by John Murray."—*D.N.B.* In that year Murray wrote to Constable: "You will probably have heard that Miller is about to retire and that I have ventured to undertake to succeed him. . . . I did not very long hesitate about accepting his offer. . . . Miller's retirement is very extraordinary, for no one in the trade will believe that he has made a fortune; but from what he has laid open to me, it is clear that he has succeeded."

² The correspondence commenced with this letter laid the foundation of a great friendship between the two poets. Scott had been naturally annoyed at Byron's attack on him in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. But he acknowledged the cleverness of *Childe Harold*. It was Murray who healed the breach between them when he wrote to Scott, 27th June 1812, recounting Byron's report of his conversation with the Prince Regent.—PROTHERO, *Works of Lord Byron: Letters and Journals*, vol. ii. p. 131. See last letter to Murray.

Street, to give your Lordship the present trouble. But my intrusion concerns a large debt of gratitude due to your Lordship, and a much less important one of explanation, which I think I owe to myself, as I dislike standing low in the opinion of any person whose talents rank so highly in my own as your Lordship's most deservedly do.

The first *count*, as our technical language expresses it, relates to the high pleasure I have received from the Pilgrimage of Childe Harold, and from its precursors ; the former, with all its classical associations, some of which are lost on so poor a scholar as I am, possesses the additional charm of vivid and animated description, mingled with original sentiment ;—but besides this debt, which I owe your Lordship in common with the rest of the reading public, I have to acknowledge my particular thanks for your having distinguished by praise, in the work which your Lordship rather dedicated in general to satire, some of my own literary attempts. And this leads me to put your Lordship right in the circumstances respecting the sale of Marmion, which had reached you in a distorted and misrepresented form, and which, perhaps, I have some reason to complain, were given to the public without more particular inquiry. The poem, my Lord, was *not* written upon contract for a sum of money—though it is too true that it was sold and published in a very unfinished state (which I have since regretted) to enable me to extricate myself from some engagements which fell suddenly upon me by the unexpected misfortunes of a very near relation. So that, to quote statute and precedent, I really come under the case cited by Juvenal, though not quite in the extremity of the classic author—

Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendit Agaven.

And so much for a mistake, into which your Lordship might easily fall, especially as I generally find it the easiest way of stopping sentimental compliments on the beauty, &c. of certain poetry, and the delights which the author must have taken in the composition, by assigning

the readiest reason that will cut the discourse short, upon a subject where one must appear either conceited, or affectedly rude and cynical.

As for my attachment to literature, I sacrificed for the pleasure of pursuing it very fair chances of opulence and professional honours, at a time of life when I fully knew their value; and I am not ashamed to say, that in deriving advantages in compensation from the partial favour of the public, I have added some comforts and elegancies to a bare independence. I am sure your Lordship's good sense will easily put this unimportant egotism to the right account, for—though I do not know the motive would make me enter into controversy with a fair or an *unfair* literary critic—I may be well excused for a wish to clear my personal character from any tinge of mercenary or sordid feeling in the eyes of a contemporary of genius. Your Lordship will likewise permit me to add, that you would have escaped the trouble of this explanation, had I not understood that the satire alluded to had been suppressed, not to be reprinted. For in removing a prejudice on your Lordship's own mind, I had no intention of making any appeal by or through you to the public, since my own habits of life have rendered my defence as to avarice or rapacity rather too easy.¹

Leaving this foolish matter where it lies, I have to request your Lordship's acceptance of my best thanks for the flattering communication which you took the trouble to make Mr. Murray on my behalf, and which could not fail to give me the gratification which I am sure you

¹ A tone of repentance for the offensive allusions he had made to *Marmion* in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* enters into Byron's reply of 6th July: "I feel sorry that you should have thought it worth while to notice the 'evil works of my nonage' as the thing is suppressed *voluntarily* & your explanation is too kind not to give me pain. The satire was written when I was very young & very angry, & fully bent on displaying my wrath & my wit, & now I am haunted by the ghosts of my wholesale assertions." It is interesting to compare his account of his conversation with the Prince Regent with Murray's, already quoted: "He ordered me to be presented to him at a ball . . . he talked to me of you & your immortalities, he preferred you to every bard past & present, & asked which of your works

intended. I dare say our worthy bibliopolist overcoloured his report of your Lordship's conversation with the Prince Regent, but I owe my thanks to him nevertheless for the excuse he has given me for intruding these pages on your Lordship. Wishing you health, spirit, and perseverance, to continue your pilgrimage through the interesting countries which you have still to pass with Childe Harold, I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT

P.S.—Will your Lordship permit me a verbal criticism on Childe Harold, were it only to show I have read his Pilgrimage with attention? “*Nuestra Dama de la Pena*” means, I suspect, not our Lady of Crime or Punishment, but our Lady of the Cliff; the difference, is, I believe, merely in the accentuation of “*peña*.”¹

[Lockhart]

TO CHARLES KILPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR CHARLES SHARPE,—The transcript I sent you of Johnstone's speech was from a copy belonging to my

pleased me most, it was a difficult question. I answered, I thought the ‘Lay.’ He said his own opinion was nearly similar; in speaking of the others I told him that I thought you more particularly the poet of *Princes*, as *they* never appeared more fascinating than in Marmion & the Lady of the Lake; he was pleased to coincide & to dwell on the description of your James's as no less royal than political. . . . This interview was accidental. . . . To be thus praised by your Sovereign must be gratifying to you, & if that gratification is not alloyed by the communication being made through me, the bearer of it will consider himself very fortunately & sincerely, etc.”
—*Walpole Collection*.

¹ *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto I, stanza xx, line 4—“And rest ye at ‘Our Lady's house of Woc.’” Byron's note to this in the Second Edition runs: “Since the publication of this poem, I have been informed [by W. Scott, July 1, 1812] of the misapprehension of the term *Nossa Señora de Pena*. It was owing to the want of the *tilde*, or mark over the *n*, which alters the signification of the word: with it, *Peña* signifies a rock; without it, *Pena* has the sense I adopted. I do not think it necessary to alter the passage; as, though the common acceptance affixed to it is ‘Our Lady of the Rock,’ I may well assume the other sense from the severities practised there.” There is a discrepancy with regard to the date of the above letter: Lockhart gives 3rd July; Byron gives 1st July.

friend Mr. Gillies. But I have since found my own which I inclose & which I think is rather more particular though agreeing in general with that which I sent you. As the minutiae of these matters are always the most interesting therefore I send you the inclosed "more last words of the worthy Knight" whose fate it was to be suspected for serving his friend. Yours truly W. S.

[EDINBURGH 10 July 1812]

[Hornel]

TO LORD BYRON

ABBOTSFORD, NEAR MELROSE, 16th July 1812

MY LORD,—I am much indebted to your Lordship for your kind and friendly letter ; and much gratified by the Prince Regent's good opinion of my literary attempts. I know so little of courts or princes, that any success I may have had in hitting off the Stuarts is, I am afraid, owing to a little old Jacobite leaven which I sucked in with the numerous traditionary tales that amused my infancy. It is a fortunate thing for the Prince himself that he has a literary turn, since nothing can so effectually relieve the ennui of state, and the anxieties of power.

I hope your Lordship intends to give us more of Childe Harold. I was delighted that my friend Jeffrey—for such, in despite of many a feud, literary and political, I always esteem him—has made so handsomely the *amende honorable* for not having discovered in the bud the merits of the flower ; and I am happy to understand that the retraction so handsomely made was received with equal liberality. These circumstances may perhaps some day lead you to revisit Scotland, which has a maternal claim upon you, and I need not say what pleasure I should have in returning my personal thanks for the honour you have done me. I am labouring here to contradict an old proverb, and make a silk purse out of a sow's ear,—namely, to convert a bare *haugh* and *brae*, of about 100 acres,

into a comfortable farm. Now, although I am living in a gardener's hut, and although the adjacent ruins of Melrose have little to tempt one who has seen those of Athens, yet, should you take a tour which is so fashionable at this season, I should be very happy to have an opportunity of introducing you to anything remarkable in my fatherland. My neighbour, Lord Somerville, would, I am sure, readily supply the accommodations which I want, unless you prefer a couch in a closet, which is the utmost hospitality I have at present to offer.¹ The fair, or shall I say the sage, Apreece that was, Lady Davy that is, is soon to show us how much science she leads captive in Sir Humphrey ; so your Lordship sees, as the citizen's wife says in the farce, " Threadneedle Street has some charms," since they procure us such celebrated visitants. As for me, I would rather cross-question your Lordship about the outside of Parnassus, than learn the nature of the contents of all the other mountains in the world. Pray, when under " its cloudy canopy " did you hear anything of the celebrated Pegasus ? Some say he has been brought off with other curiosities to Britain, and now covers at Tattersal's. I would fain have a cross from him out of my little moss-trooper's Galloway, and I think your Lordship can tell me how to set about it, as I recognise his true paces in the high-mettled description of Ali Pacha's military court.

A wise man said—or, if not, I, who am no wise man, now say—that there is no surer mark of regard than when your correspondent ventures to write nonsense to you. Having, therefore, like Dogberry, bestowed all my tediousness upon your Lordship, you are to conclude that I have given you a convincing proof that I am very much your Lordship's obliged and very faithful servant,

[*Lockhart*]

WALTER SCOTT

¹ Byron, of course, never visited Scott in Scotland. They did not meet till 1815 in London, and their intimacy then grew during two months of that year. But Lady Byron, as we shall see, paid a visit to Abbotsford in the autumn of 1817.

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR SHARPE,—It is with great pleasure that I send you a copy both of the dying speech & song relative to the hapless Knight of Caskieben who died like a true knight errant but in an unusual manner though for the common cause a lady fair.¹ I have a copy of the Chronicle in hand for you it is certainly the most ancient and authentic account which we have of the reign of James II and contradicts in many points the common histories. I send a copy of the declaration of the King in favour of my Chief. By the way looking into the Stagering State I observe Sir Gideon Murray² was an ally of our Clan & carried Buccleuch's standard at the affair of Dryff Sands such I fancy had been the consequence of the marriage with muckle mou'd Meg. By the way I believe I did make a mistake about the Gudewife of Kelton & now

¹ Sir John Johnston, criminal, was son of Sir George Johnston of Caskieben (an estate in Dyce parish, Aberdeenshire), a Nova Scotian baronet. On 10th November 1690 he was privy to the abduction of Mary Wharton, an heiress, by Captain the Hon. James Campbell. Mrs. Wharton was nearly related to the notorious Lord Wharton, friend and favourite of William III. Sir John was condemned to death and hanged at Tyburn on 23rd December 1690, "while his more fortunate companion succeeded in marrying the heiress and making his escape to Scotland."—*Sharpe's Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 530. The copies Scott sent to Sharpe were probably: *An account of the behaviour, confession, and last dying speech of Sir J. Johnston, who was executed at Tyburn, . . . the 23d day of December, . . . 1690, for stealing of Mrs. M. Wharton, in company of Captain James Campbell and A. Montgomery, since fled*, London, 1690, s. sh. fol., and *Captain Johnson's last farewell to the world, etc. [A ballad]*, Newcastle upon Tyne [1720?], broad-side fol.

² Sir Gideon Murray, Lord Elibank (d. 1621), of Elibank, son of Sir John Murray of Blackbarony, Peeblesshire, and Griselda Bethune, relict of William Scott younger of Brankholm, Roxburghshire, ancestor of the dukes of Buccleuch. For killing a man named Aichison he was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle. Later he became "chamberlain to his nephew, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh . . . In the fray of Dryfe Sands [the Dryfe river is a tributary of the Annan] on 7 Dec. 1593 between the Scotts and the Johnstones, in which John, seventh or eighth lord Maxwell, was slain, Murray was present with five hundred of the Scotts, and carried their laird's standard." (Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet's *The Staggering State of the Scots Statesmen for one hundred years, viz. from 1550 to 1650. . . . Now first published from an original manuscript*. R. Nimmo: Edinburgh, 1754.) He married Margaret Pentland.

recollect it was to her not to Lady Lockerby that the Sisera & Jael business of Lord Maxwell was attributed.¹

What you tell me of the D. of G.² is very curious and might enlighten the intellects of some of our judges who in a *cause célèbre* of our own day protested, against the united testimony of ancients & moderns not to mention that of direct witnesses in the case that there were no such propensities as the ancients ascribed to Sappho & the court of Charles II to Madselle Hobart.

The re-union of the P[rince] & P[rince]ss will be an astonishing phenomenon but I fancy he has got a fright & wishes to secure the attachment of the decent classes of society to which this would be a great step. But to be sure it must be a cat & dog life between them after all unless they begin as they are to end with keeping different corners of Carleton house.

As to the Douglasses Chalmers has fallen into a great error. The whole theory rests on this—Certain lands on Douglas water “Theobaldo Flammatico” who as Chalmers avers (but this as Partridge says is a *gratis dictum*) was the father of William de Douglas witness to some charters between the years 1170 & 1190. Now notwithstanding that he disingenuously would have you to infer there is some stronger evidence of the connection between Theobald than his own *say-so* & the assumed

¹ In Sharpe's letter [28th June] he had written to Scott about old papers and charters he had respecting the Kirkpatrick ancestry, and, alluding to the fray at Dryffe, had remarked that “Lord Maxwell was slain, not by the gudwife of Lockerby, but of Kelton, which is near the scene of battle. She went out, I have heard, to strip the dead, and found Lord Maxwell in a ditch.”—*Walpole Collection*. See Scott's previous letter to Sharpe, 18th June 1812.

² The Duchess of Gordon. Sharpe had written: “I had lately put into my hands a packet of letters written by the wife of the second Duke to a Mrs. Dunbar, which prove that she had the turn of Sappho, and of many Ladies mentioned by Brantome. How Mrs. Dunbar came to preserve such documents is wonderful. The Duchess, you know, was a daughter of the famous Earl of Peterborough. . . . I do not talk of these epistles in general, for eschewing the resurrection of too recent scandals; but with you I can have no *literary secrets*.”—*Walpole Collection*.

identity of the lands possessed by them yet I understand there is no other support whatever & the lands are so far from being the same estate that it has happend rather wonderfully that those granted to Theobald Fleming which are mentiond by their proper boundaries in the Abbot's charter to him are not now & never were any part of the adjacent Barony of Douglas so down falls Chalmers' whole system. Indeed though a most indefatigable bearer of wood & stone for antiquarian erections I hold him incapable of putting one stone on another or in other words of drawing any sound or wholesome inference from the mass of matter which he assembles together.

I think that tradition must be accurate in the matter of the slaughter of the Reid Cuming indeed the assumption of the crest seems sufficiently to warrant our believing it and an hundred reasons might occasion the circumstance which Hailes stumbles at.

Now let me try to interest you in a sort of hobby horsical proposal of mine for amusement of a winters or autumnal evening. You know I have a fine collection of witch books & such like. Now what think you of a selection of the most striking and absurd stories of apparitions witchcraft demonology & so forth tacked together with ironical disquisitions and occasionally ornamented with historical and antiquarian anecdotes & instead of a broomstick to clap three or four humourous drawings to the tails of our witches which we would take care to have beautifully etchd and which would suit the publication

Up in the air on my bonny gray mare
And I see & I see & I see her yet.

The plan might admit a sprinkling of poetry especially of an humourous cast. We would carefully conceal names & I am certain might have a great deal of fun and afford some to the publick. We could divide the literary part of the task as was most agreeable to you. I would not confine ourselves to dry extracts but would abridge &

select and ornament the narratives where that was judged more advisable. Moreover I think we might put down in such a collection any of those mystical tales of tradition which we may be able yet to recover or may have stored in our memory. Pray let me interest you in this matter

For if you deign not to assist

You make all this an idle dream.¹

We, for Mrs. Scott is my travelling companion, propose to be in Dumfriesshire about the middle of August—as the Duke & Duchess will then be at Drumlanrig. I trust you will go there with us and see what is left in the old library & what pictures are in the halls. But before going thither we will visit Hoddam Castle agreeable to your kind invitation.

O he jam satis quothe my fingers & I fear your eyes will re-echo the quotation though barest of the threadbare.

Ever yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 6 *June* [6 *July*? 1812]²

My address will be Abbotsford Melrose after this week.

I inclose a few doggerel lines about Douglas of Dornock³

¹ "The joint work was never undertaken, but it took shape with each in a separate form—Scott's treatise on 'Demonology and Witchcraft,' and Sharpe's essay on Scottish witchcraft in the introduction to Law's 'Memorials.'"—Footnote, *Sharpe's Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 557. Sharpe enters into the proposal very fully in his letter (21st July 1812), pp. 570-1.

² In May of 1812 Scott moved into Abbotsford. This letter is written from Edinburgh. It looks as though Scott had gone wrong with the date by a month, as Sharpe's letter (to which this is a reply) is postmarked 30th June and docketed by Scott 28th June.

³ In his letter of 21st July 1812 Sharpe writes: "Dornock's Distress, which amused me much; and of which a copy is a great addition to a pretty extensive collection of papers respecting the Queensberry family that is in the possession of your humble servant. The unfortunate Laird who sets his sorrows forth in such a moving strain was gt. grandson of Archibald Douglas of Dornock, 2nd son of the first E. of Queensberry; and son of the last Laird of Dornock (for 'tis a groundless title which he assumeth in his tragedy) by a dr. of Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall." After a further account of the family, he concludes the passage with "so much and de trop, for Dornock, and his tragical dialogue."—*Walpole Collection*.

which I thought you might like to see as the scene lies at Ecclefechan. The poor poet like many a country gentleman seems to have been eaten up by his Men of business who in Scotland supply the place of hawks hounds the turf & the gaming table in easing the landed men of their dirty acres.

[*Hornel*]

To JOHN GALT¹

ABBOTSFORD NEAR MELROSE

16 July 1812

DEAR SIR,—I should be very ungrateful if I delayed long to acknowledge the pleasure I have received from

¹ John Galt, the novelist, was born on 2nd May 1779 at Irvine in Ayrshire. He was trained for pursuits of trade and commerce, but, in his literary capacity, was entirely self-educated. He spent his early years in a mercantile house in Greenock. Later, when he became a student of Lincoln's Inn in 1809, he began a life of Cardinal Wolsey, but the work was suspended for some years owing to commercial employment on the Continent. Returning to England, he edited the *New British Theatre* (4 vols. 1814-15) for Colburn. One of his contributions was a play called *The Witness*. Under a new title, *The Appeal*, it was performed at the Edinburgh Theatre in 1818, Sir Walter Scott having written a comic epilogue and Lockhart and Captain Hamilton (author of *Cyril Thornton*) a prologue. Like his other dramatic pieces—according to Scott he wrote “the worst tragedies ever seen”—it was a failure, and ran for only four nights. His first literary success, composed on the lines of Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker*, was his novel, *The Ayrshire Legatees*, which appeared in “Blackwood” in 1820. This was followed by the publication in 1821 of *The Annals of the Parish*, though it had been begun as early as 1813, before the appearance of *Waverley* and *Guy Mannering*. “It was rejected by the publishers of those same works, with the assurance that a novel or work of fiction entirely Scottish would not take with the public.”—*Chambers's Cyclopædia of Eng. Lit.* His ambition had been, as he declared, “to write a book that would be for Scotland what the *Vicar of Wakefield* is for England.” It received high praise from Henry Mackenzie and Scott, who, as we shall see in his letter of 11th June 1821, wrote to Joanna Baillie: “Pray read, or have read to you by Mrs. Agnes, the *Annals of the Parish*. Mr. Galt . . . has now written a most excellent novel, if it can be called so.” Then came, in quick succession, *The Provost*, *Sir Andrew Wylie*, *The Entail* (which both Scott and Byron are said to have read three times), etc. Galt was by this time so elated by success that he declared to R. P. Gillies “his literary resources were far greater in extent than those of Sir Walter Scott or any other contemporary.”—*Memoirs of a Literary Veteran*, iii. 59. Evidently he had a mind to compete

the present of your Wolsey,¹ to whom you have done that justice which I always thought he deserved. My first perusal has been a rapid one, having been made by snatches during the hurry of the concluding session of our courts, and the bustle attending my removal to this cottage where I am trying to make myself in ballad language a "blithesome bower." But I saw much more than enough both to please and delight me as well as to convince me of the folly of the vulgar prejudice that literary talent is inconsistent with that which is necessary to prosecute the more active pursuits of life. This foolish dogma which has done infinite mischief to young men of genius who catch at it as an apology for indulging in idleness and dissipation was originally devised by good old cunning Stupidity who was unwilling that the paths leading to easy and honourable independence should be pursued by any but her own jog trot children. I assure you I pique myself as much upon understanding the dry detail of official duty as upon the popularity I have picked up otherwise, and when I consider that the former has secured my independence I cannot but compare the one to the hat and the other to the feathers stuck into it. A man would willingly keep both, but the former is indispensable to happiness. Your labour

with Scott in historical fiction, for he soon after this produced *Ringan Gilhaize*, a story of the Scottish Covenanters; *The Spaewife*, a tale of the times of James I of Scotland; and *Rothelan*, a historical novel on the reign of Edward. After sojourns in Glasgow, London, and Edinburgh, Galt went to Canada and became engaged in one or two business schemes there. He got into difficulties with the Canada Company, for whom he worked, and was accused of lowering the Company's stock. He was at last superseded, and he returned, disappointed and depressed, to England in 1829. Poor and paralysed, he died at Greenock on 11th April 1839. There seems to be no account of Scott and Galt ever meeting. Recalling Scott's death in his *Autobiography*, Galt says "no one could regret the event more, for, although I knew him but slightly, it called forth associations that were sad, though not sorrowful." This is probably the only extant Scott letter to Galt. It may be added that Galt is one of the writers to whom the authorship of the "Canadian Boat-Song" has been attributed.

¹ *The life and administration of Cardinal Wolsey*, pp. xx, 268, ccxxxiii. Cadell and Davies: London, 1812.

and your success will henceforth form a strong additional argument to buckler my favourite proposition that men of genius are not only equally fit but much fitter for the business of the world than dunces, providing always they will give their talents fair play by curbing them with application.¹

To return to the high-souled Cardinal—I observe what you say about ransoming prisoners. The practice continued on the borders so long as the wars between England and Scotland lasted, and had much effect in softening their ferocity. It was a motive for amity after conquest, and the ransoms were seldom exorbitant, because the victor knew his own case might be the same to-morrow. You will find in Rymers' *Foedera*² a great

¹ Scott seems to have had two opinions about Galt's plays—the one given in footnote, p. 146, and the other, to which Galt had referred in his letter from London of 4th July, which runs: "The opinion which you gave me of my dramas was much more flattering than I had presumed to hope. They were but hasty scetches, and the rudeness of the pencilling as well as the topics made me apprehensive that they would only offend. I now take the liberty of sending another volume. It completes all that I at present intend to publish. Whether I shall ever be induced to assume the character of an author will depend on other circumstances than the success of these works. I am now on the point of returning to the South of Europe with the view of giving practical effect to the result of my observations on the mediterranean, and the period of my departure is so near that I shall not have time to receive an answer. But if you will do me the favour of writing me what you think of this present volume my friends Messrs Finlay Hodgson & Co of this city will transmit the letter. Very early in life I was seized with the desire of endeavouring to show that literary recreations were not incompatible with mercantile pursuits, and the notice which you were pleased to take of a few stanzas in the Greenock paper addressed to yourself on the publication of *Marmion* emboldened me to persevere. I have thus become a considerable author without having impaired the opinion which my friends entertained of my attention to other affairs. Accept my best thanks for the notice which you have taken of productions."—*Walpole Collection*. Scott's letter is addressed to c/o Messrs. Finlay Hodgkinson, London.

² Thomas Rymer (1641-1713), author and archaeologist. *Foedera, conventiones, literae, et cujuscunque generis Acta publica, inter Reges Angliae, et alios quosvis Imperatores, Reges, Pontifices, Principes, vel Communitates, . . . ab anno 1101, ad nostra usque tempora, habita aut tractata; ex autographis, infra secretores Archivorum Regiorum thesaurarias . . . Editio secunda . . . studio G. Holmes. (Tom. 15-16 . . . edidit R. Sanderson. Tom. 17-20 accurante R. Sanderson.) 20 tom. Londini, 1704-32. fol. Tom. 18 of this copy contains the leaves that were cancelled by order of Parliament.*

many details about the ransom of the prisoners taken at Solway Moss.

I do not observe that you have noticed that *Patch* mentioned as Henry VIIIth's fool, where you record his joke concerning the title of Defender of the faith, was the same who was bestowed on him by the Cardinal in whose service he must have been when he made the said jest. The extreme reluctance of the poor jester to part from his master reminds us of the attachment of the fool in *King Lear* and shews how our great Master knew to touch the truth in every character. Patch was so famous that his name became proverbial for a *fool*.¹

Wolsey is censured by Roy and others for intemperance. Yet if Richelieu says true personal intemperance could not be imputed to him. A part of his magnificent structure at Hampton Court is a pipe of water conveyed through a tunnel from a very fine fountain on the other side of the Thames which distributes water through the whole building in a most complete and curious manner, so curious indeed and complicated that not many years ago when something went wrong it was found impossible to repair it untill by a chance a drawing of the original plan was found. Now it is said that Wolsey was at this princely expence because water was his principal beverage, and that on the Richmond side of Thames was very indifferent.

I have exhausted my paper on these [?] antiquarian scraps and have only room left to say Dear Sir I am ever your obliged and faithful

WALTER SCOTT

[*Postscript written at beginning of letter*]

Wherever this shall find you I need not say it brings my best wishes for your prosperity and health.

[*Sir Alfred J. Law*]

¹ The real surname of Wolsey's domestic jester was Sexton. The meaning given to "patch" in the *New Eng. Dicty.* suggests that it was applied to a fool on account of his patched garb or patched face, or an anglicized form of the Italian *pazzo*, fool.

TO CHARLES CARPENTER

Augst. 4th 1812 ABBOTSFORD

MY DEAR CARPENTER,—The melancholy news of poor Leydens death reached me some time before your kind letter. General Malcolm¹ has touched his character with equal truth & kindness. The little oddities for they really hardly deserved the name of faults only served to shade his high attainments & the excellent qualities of his heart : he will be a great loss to Eastern literature & not less to his European friends especially to myself. Thus as we advance in life our social comforts are gradually abridged. Do think of this my dear Carpenter and come back to Britain while the circle of your friends is not materially diminish'd. I am happy to see from your last expressions that affairs promise to let you escape from India in a year or two. As health is better than wealth I trust you will hasten the period of your return as much as possible & pray send us early intelligence as I shall make a point to meet you in London at least if not at

¹ Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833), Indian administrator and diplomatist, was the fourth son of George Malcolm of Burnfoot, Dumfriesshire, a member of a younger branch of the Malcolms of Lochore, Fifeshire. On returning from India in July 1812 he began to form various literary connections, became acquainted with Sir Walter Scott, produced his *History of Persia* in July 1815 with great success, and received the hon. degree of doctor of laws at Oxford in 1816.—*D.N.B.* It was Sir John Malcolm who first presented Scott to the Duke of Wellington—see Lockhart. In a letter of 23rd February [? 1816] he wrote to Scott : “ Of the many pleasing communications I have received on the occasion of publishing my history [of Persia] not one has been more gratifying than your approbation. . . . I would not mention *Pauls* Letters, with which I have been delighted were it not to state that Sir Colin Campbell who you know was well acquainted with the Scene told me yesterday that he considered the account of the Battle of Waterloo—as given in that production of an *unknown author* to be the best and most correct that had been yet published. I consider the opinion of my friend Colin upon such a point better than that of all the Critics that frequent Albemarle Street put together.” “ His last public address was at a meeting in the Thatched House Tavern, for the purpose of forming a subscription to buy up the mansion of Sir Walter Scott for his family . . . his concluding sentiment was, ‘ that when he was gone, his son might be proud to say that his father had been among the contributors to that shrine of genius.’ ”—*Chambers's Eminent Scotsmen*.

Portsmouth. Our private affairs continue prosperous & our family healthy : they are all fine children but little Charles the youngest promises to possess extraordinary talent. My income has been greatly increas'd by my predecessor or rather colleague in office being placed by government upon a superannuated pension which gave me access to almost all the emoluments of the office (£1300 in gross) to which otherwise I would only have succeeded after his death. To bring this about was one of the last labours of poor Lord Melville whose steady friendship for me was active in my favour to the very verge of his life. Encouraged by this good fortune my lease of Ashestiel being out & it being necessary as Sheriff that I should reside in Selkirkshire occasionally, I have bought a farm of about 120 acres lying along the side of the Tweed : this indeed is its only advantage in point of situation being quite bare of wood & unclosed. But as the Spanish proverb says "Time & I against any two," I have set to work to plant & to improve & I hope to make Abbotsford a very sweet little thing in the course of a few years. Till we shall have leisure & time & money to build a little mansion we have fixed our residence in the little farm house where our only sitting room is about twelve feet square & all the others in proportion : so that upon the whole we live as if we were on board of ship. But besides the great amusement I promise myself in dressing this little farm it is convenient & pleasant as lying in my native country among those to whom I am most attached by relationship & friendship. We have also a very pleasant friend of yours in our neighbourhood the fine old veteran General Gowdie¹ : he lives about three miles from us & was here the other morning as keen as a school boy about a fishing party to a small lake in our vicinity : he & I have a debate about a new harpoon for sticking salmon which he invented & which I have the boldness to think I have altered & improved : he speaks very

¹ *F.L.* has "Goudie."

often of you & will be delighted to see you. I left your friend Capt'n Campbell in Edinburgh : he is married & desirous of getting upon the recruiting Staff in that city. I have used all the interest I had in his favour with the officer who is at the head of the department in Edinburgh & who happens to be my particular acquaintance but I fear the appointment will be made in London. Public affairs assume a much more pleasant aspect than of late.: Lord Wellington whose splendid military talents are daily more & more manifest having expelled the French from Portugal is now in a fair way of clearing Spain of them unless Bonaparte has the means of bringing his Russian quarrel to a speedy termination which is very unlikely if they adhere to their plan of avoiding a general engagement & suffering the invader to involve himself in the interminable deserts of their country : this it is said is the plan suggested by Bernadotte. I trust in God it will not be rashly departed from. Domestic matters are not so comfortable : there have been as you will see from the papers very serious disturbances among the manufacturers of the midland counties which by the mistaken lenity of government have been suffer'd to assume an alarming degree of organization. Correspondences have been carried on by the Malcontents through every manufacturing town in England & Scotland & the infection had even reached the little thriving community of Galashiels a flourishing village in my district. I was not long however of breaking these associations & securing their papers : the principal rogue escaped me for having heard I was suddenly come into the place he observed "its not for nought that the hawk whistles," & so took to the hills & escaped. Charlotte is in very good health & begs her kindest remembrances : she proposes to write but I will not vouch for her letter knowing her talents for procrastination in such matters. There is a noble estate with a fine old house & park to be sold within ten miles of us. I wish you were here to buy it with all

my heart as it would suit you very well for a summer residence. Charlotte joins in kindest regards to Mrs. Carpenter & believe me dear Carpenter Ever your affectionate brother

WALTER SCOTT

The Dumergues were all well when we heard but I have not seen them these two years & I am scarce likely to be in London except for the hope of meeting you. Since finishing my letter we have had the glorious news of the Battle of Salamanca in which Wellington has almost entirely destroy'd Marshall Marmonts fine army.¹ The news from the North are still favorable, the Russians while maintaining the defensive have given some very hard blows to the French armies. I trust in God all will go well & Europe will yet see peace before the present generation are in their graves which for one I have long ceased to hope for.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO DANIEL TERRY

[*September 1812*]

I HAVE lacked your assistance, my dear sir, for twenty whimsicalities this autumn. Abbotsford, as you will readily conceive, has considerably changed its face since the auspices of Mother Retford were exchanged for ours. We have got up a good garden wall, complete stables in the haugh, according to Stark's plan, and the old farm-yard being enclosed with a wall, with some little

¹ "While he [Marmont] was executing his flank-march across the front of the British position, Wellington came down upon him with the speed and fury of a thunderbolt. . . . Three French divisions were routed and dispersed in half-an-hour, and Marmont himself was grievously wounded by a round-shot as he was hastening to repair his fault. The remainder of the army of Portugal . . . were gradually pushed off the field by a concentric attack from front and flank. They lost 8000 killed and wounded, 7000 prisoners, two eagles and 12 guns. . . . The victory of Salamanca shook the French domination in Spain to its very foundations."—*Cambridge Mod. Hist.*, ix, pp. 472-73.

picturesque additions in front, has much relieved the stupendous height of the Doctor's barn. The new plantations have thriven amazingly well, the acorns are coming up fast, and Tom Purdie is the happiest and most consequential person in the world. My present work is building up the well with some *debris* from the Abbey. O for your assistance, for I am afraid we shall make but a botched job of it, especially as our materials are of a very miscellaneous complexion. The worst of all is, that while my trees grow and my fountain fills, my purse, in an inverse ratio, sinks to zero. This last circumstance will, I fear, make me a very poor guest at the literary entertainment your researches hold out for me. I should, however, like much to have the Treatise on Dreams, by the author of the New Jerusalem,¹ which, as John Cuthbertson the smith said of the minister's sermon, must be neat work. The Loyal Poems, by N. T., are probably by poor Nahum Tate,² who associated with Brady in versifying the Psalms, and more honourably with Dryden in the second part of Absalom and Achitophel. I never saw them, however, but would give a guinea or thirty shillings for the collection. Our friend John Ballantyne has, I learn, made a sudden sally to London, and doubtless you will crush a quart with him

¹ *Lingua Tersancta: or, a . . . compleat allegorick dictionary to the Holy Language of the Spirit, . . . expounding and illustrating all the . . . words or divine symbols in dream, vision, and apparition, etc.* By W. F. Esq., Author of *The New Jerusalem* [i.e. William Freke]. 8vo. London, 1703. The language in this dictionary of dreams is often as coarse as the images. William Freke (1662-1744), a mystical writer, "gave himself out as 'the great Elijah.' . . . His subsequent writings show an increasing craziness, and there is a more revolting grossness in his dreams, which constitute the autobiography of a diseased imagination. He ate sparingly, and claimed divine approval for his evening potations." *The New Jerusalem* (printed about 1701) has not been traced.—*D.N.B.* "Freke" is given in *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 106.

² Scott was wrong in ascribing them to Nahum Tate. "The Reverend Alexander Dyce says, 'N. T. stands for Nathaniel Thomson, the Tory bookseller, who published these Loyal Poems.'—LOCKHART. *A Collection of 86 Loyal Poems, . . . viz. The horrid Salamanca Plot in 1678, and the present fanatical Conspiracy in 1683. To which is added, Advice to the Carver, written on the death of the late L[ord] Stafford, with several Poems on their Majesties Coronation . . . collected by N. T[hompson].* London, 1685. 8o.

or a pottle pot ; he will satisfy your bookseller for "The Dreamer," or any other little purchase you may recommend for me. You have pleased Miss Baillie very much both in public and in society, and though not fastidious, she is not, I think, particularly lavish of applause either way. A most valuable person is she, and as warm-hearted as she is brilliant.—Mrs. Scott and all our little folks are well. I am relieved of the labour of hearing Walter's lesson by a gallant son of the church, who with one leg of wood, and another of oak, walks to and fro from Melrose every day for that purpose. Pray stick to the dramatic work,¹ and never suppose either that you can be intrusive, or that I can be uninterested in whatever concerns you. Yours,

W. S.

[Lockhart]

TO LADY ABERCORN

ABBOTSFORD, 2nd September 1812

MY DEAR LADY MARCHIONESS,—I have not heard from you this long time at which I begin to be a little fretted as I am very desirous to know what your Ladyship and the Marquis are doing. We saw the Kembles a day in Edinr. where I went on purpose from this place to see him on the stage. I think he played Coriolanus and Cato as near perfection as I can conceive theatrical performance. His whole appearance in the former was the Patrician warrior and in Cato the Stoic Senator and patriot. It was absolutely enchanting and formed one of the few exhibitions which I could have seen begun again when the curtain had dropped.

Here I am in full possession of my kingdom of Barataria,²

¹ "An edition of the British Dramatists had, I believe, been projected by Mr. Terry."—LOCKHART.

² The island city over which Sancho Panza was appointed governor. "They gave him to understand that it was called the island of Barataria either because that was really the name of the place, or because he obtained the government of it at so cheap a rate."

a 120 handsome acres to play at hobby horses with. And my principality has all the merit which my girls give to an undressed doll for I have the entire pleasure of cloathing it. We are all screwed into the former farmhouse—our single sitting-room is twelve feet square and the room above it subdivided for cribs to the children—an old coal-hole makes our cellar a garret above the little kitchen with a sort of light closet make bedroom and dressing-room decorated—lumbered, my wife says—with all my guns pistols targets broadswords bugle-horns and old armour. Then I have the livelong day to toil among masons and workmen not few in number for I assembled forty or fifty round a bonfire on the news of the battle of Salamanca—to be sure there was the attraction of an ocean of whiskypunch which brought in several occasional recruits. The banks of the Tweed looked very merry on this glorious occasion and the light of the various bonfires reminded me of the old times when they were kindled for another purpose

Red glared the Beacon on Pownell
On Eildon hills were three
The bugle-horns on moor and fell
Were heard continually.

The bugle-horns however have given way to the pipes and violins which were all put into requisition on the occasion and the people—at least my subjects danced almost the whole night.

As for my more grave occupations, my little plantation is thriving very well and my offices are in a fair way of being completed. I have also got a good wall built around a sheltered and fertile spot of about 3 quarters of an acre which I hope will make a clever little garden. In the mean time I am not a little puzzled in my attempts to acquire some knowledge of shrubs and trees especially those that are not indigenous. I am reduced to such shifts that I asked a lady the other day what shrub it was that had a leaf like a saddle and was much edified by

learning that it was the tulip-tree. By such awkward steps do learners ascend the ladder of knowledge.

I am puzzling my brains about a poem called *Rokeby*. I have had it long in hand but I threw the whole into the fire about a month since being satisfied that I had corrected the spirit out of it as a lively pupil is sometimes flogged into a dunce by a severe schoolmaster. Since I have resumed the pen in my old Cossack manner I have succeeded rather more to my own mind. It is a tale of the civil wars of 1643 but has no reference to history or politics only embracing the adventures and distresses of a particular family of Cavaliers.

Adieu my dear friend—all this nonsense is meant to extort from you an answer—let it but say you and the family are well and, howsoever short it will be most acceptable to your truly faithful and respectful,

WALTER SCOTT

I was going to Dumfries there to spend a few days at the Duke of Buccleuchs castle of Drumlanrig but one of the young ladies is I fear very dangerously unwell. It is a little girl who was never healthy but for that very reason her mother is much attached to her.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE ¹

THE above will complete the sheet which please forward with a duplicate to *Rokeby* Greta Bridge Yorkshire. I got all your packets which brought most *welcome* news. Let feelings *true* be substituted for *real* in sheet A. I will write at length first opportunity.

EDGER[S]TON *Friday mornng* [Sept. 1812]

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ This was written on the turn over of the frank and refers to *Rokeby*. The transcriber writes : " There is in MS. of this more correspondence than in any of the others—during its progress he set out for Mr Morris. At Stanza XII of First Canto he seems to have been at Mr Rutherfords of Edger[s]ton." See vol. i. appendix, pp. 418, 420.

TO REV. MR. POLWHELE

ABBOTSFORD, 10 *Sept.* 1812

MY DEAR SIR,—Nothing but my present residence being so distant from the Ballantynes, prevented my immediately satisfying you on the subject of the “Minstrel”.¹ I have been led from day to day to expect one or both of them here, but did not see them till a few days since. I find from the state of my own transactions with them, that they are not disposed in the present state of mercantile credit, to publish any thing for which they are not under actual engagements. The facility of commercial discounts has been narrowed from *nine* and *ten* to *three* months, which of course obliges all prudent adventurers who have not the means of extending their capital, to meet the inconvenience by retrenching their trade. To this, therefore, the Muse must give way for the present, so far at least as Edinburgh is concerned. This is the real state of the case ; otherwise, independent of the merit of the performance itself, your name alone would have been sufficient to recommend any thing to a publisher in Scotland. But at present there is nothing to be done. I have a poem on the stocks myself ; but shall find some difficulty in getting it launched, at least in the way I expected, and must make considerable sacrifice to the pressure of the times.

I am busy here beautifying a farm which nothing but

¹ Polwhele had been concerned about Scott's delay in returning his [Polwhele's] MS. *Minstrel*, for on 14th August he had written : “ My suspense is often painful. You will have the goodness, I doubt not, to remove this painful suspense as soon as you can.” And then on this date (10th September) he wrote : “ Though my MS. *Minstrel* was not ready to be returned by you ; yet after my repeated importunities you wd, I think, have dropped a line to say when I might probably receive it, unless illness or absence (scarcely indeed the latter) prevented yr writing. I do not think that, respectful & friendly as my letters were, I would have used any expressions to give offence to you.”—*Walpole Collection*. See also vol. i. appendix, p. 417.

the influence of *Local Attachment*¹ could greatly recommend, unless a Christian wished to practise at once the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, for it requires the whole to judge of it favourably, its present state being altogether unpromising. It has, however, about a mile of Tweed-side, and that is a sufficient recommendation to a Borderer. I am delighted to hear of the good success of Drs. Carlyon² and Collins, who struck me as young men of great promise, and likely to make a good figure in life.

Adieu, my dear Sir. So soon as I go to Edinburgh, which will be next month or the beginning of November at furthest, I will transmit to you the MS. Should you wish to have it sooner, and will direct to Messrs. Ballantyne's, they will attend to your instructions.

Believe me, my dear Sir, very much your faithful humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, 1832]

¹ *The Influence of local attachment with respect to home. A poem.* [By Richard Polwhele] London, 1796. 8o. His son, Richard Graves Polwhele, lieutenant-colonel in the Madras artillery, referred to this in a letter to his father from Calcutta on 8th January 1812: "It will be a long time before I shall be reconciled to the Indian style of living. The following lines which I found on reading your '*Local Attachment*,' is [*sic*] quite applicable to me :

Yes ! I prefer my light green barley blade,
 To breathing maize, to fields of clustering rice ;
 And visit with more joy the plashy glade
 Where crackles at each step the sheeted ice,
 Than Indian plains, or Persian, that entice
 The soul to pleasure, for diffusing balm :
 To me more dear the oak-rough precipice,
 Than the deep verdure of the date-crown'd palm,
 Where all is lapp'd in ease, one soft insidious calm."

—*Polwhele's Traditions and Recollections*, vol. ii. 655-6.

² Clement Carlyon (1777-1864), a Truro physician, who, when travelling as a student in Germany, made the acquaintance of Coleridge. He completed his medical studies at Edinburgh and London. See note, vol. i. pp. 207-8.

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[1812]

DEAR JAMES,—The Grinders¹ news is I fear too good to be true—but the prevalence of such reports on the continent seem to imply that the Villains cause is in a bad odour—

I return the sheets. We had been shooting & is a flat line & is meant to be so—You know I am not like Sir Fretful in my vindications—but I have often seen the effect of a pause in some minute & trivial circumstance before advancing upon an important disclosure—What is unimportant in itself takes consequence from that which follows & such a minute enumeration of incidents shows not only the powerful impression on the mans own mind which attachd consequence to every thing connected with the deed but also a sort of reluctance to enter upon the confession. This is a point I have well considered though I have no doubt your criticism will be echoed & re-echoed.

[Glen]

TO WILLIAM LAIDLAW

[Extract]

[1812]

GEORGE must stick in a few wild-roses, honeysuckles, and sweet-briers in suitable places, so as to produce the luxuriance we see in the woods which Nature plants herself. We injure the effect of our plantings, so far as beauty is concerned, very much by neglecting under-wood. . . . I want to know how you are forming your glades of hard wood. Try to make them come handsomely in contact with each other, which you can only do by looking at a distance on the spot, then and there shutting your eyes as you have done when a child looking

¹ i.e. Terry's.

at the fire, and forming an idea of the same landscape with glades of woodland crossing it. Get out of your ideas about expense. It is, after all, but throwing away the price of the planting. If I were to buy a picture worth £500, nobody would wonder much. Now, if I choose to lay out £100 or £200 to make a landscape of my estate hereafter, and add so much more to its value, I certainly don't do a more foolish thing. I mention this, that you may not feel limited so much as you might in other cases by the exact attention to pounds, shillings, and pence, but consider the whole on a liberal scale. We are too apt to consider plantations as a subject of the closest economy, whereas beauty and taste have even a marketable value after the effects come to be visible. Don't dot the plantations with small patches of hard wood, and always consider the ultimate effect.

[*Notanda*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—Since I saw you (when you will remember I mentiond the only delay to Swift was the expectation of a box of his original papers from Ireland) I have got (about ten days since) a large bundle of these papers. They are not of great importance after all and I have not yet got the letters betwixt Swift and Stella which I understand throw a new light on their intimacy. But I shall be in a condition in a few days to complete the omitted Vol. after which I think nothing need stop the press. The letters to Stella should they prove fit for publication of which I have doubts may be added in Appendix to Vol I.

The loss of the print is of no consequence to me who am no print fancier. I have hopes of getting a fine original portrait from Ireland. If Mr. Caddell will take the trouble to call on my friend Mr. Hartstongue in

Molesworth Street he may perhaps be able to bring it over with him if it would not put him to too much inconvenience.¹ It is from Mr. Berwick that I expect Stellas letters.

I am anxious to have Swift out of hand having between purchases and expenditure no little occasion to realize my literary funds. Believe me Dr. Sir Your faithful
Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 20 *Sept.* 1812

[*Stevenson*]

TO LADY LOUISA STUART

MY DEAR LADY LOUISA,—Your most encouraging as well as beautiful verses joined to our friend Morritts remonstrances have given a new spur to the sides of my intent and I wrote to Morritt that I would make a raid on him with bag and baggage scrip and scrippage about Monday. But just after my letter was dispatched I was made acquainted that my attendance was indispensable upon the 5th at a meeting of Mr. Dons friends preparatory to the head court of Free-holders on the 6th for that my eloquence was to be put in requisition for that day. Mr. Don is you know the Duke of Buccleuchs candidate for Roxburghshire and I believe the Duke has few things of a political nature more at heart than his success so I must do my possible however little that may be. The only effect this will have is to expedite my journey somewhat as my stay will be rather more brief at Rokeby than

¹ "I hope now," Hartstonge had written on 11th September, "in a very few days indeed to fulfil a long made promise, of sending you a portrait of Dean Swift. . . . I have employed an artist to copy the likeness of *the Dean*, from an original portrait painted by a Mr. Bindon (to whom some poetic lines are addressed 'Mollis abuti &c' in the Dean's Works) and now in Howth Castle, it was given by Swift to one of the ancestors of Lord Howth. . . . Yesterday I believe the artist left town for that purpose, in a day or two the thing will be done, when I shall not lose a moment in transmitting it to Ashestiel."—*Walpole Collection*.

I had reckoned upon this morning. On Thursday night we sleep at Edgerstone upon the Border friday, at Corbridge or Hexham, and I hope we shall find it possible to get to Rokeby Saturday night as the distance cannot be above forty miles. But if bad roads &c. render this impossible which is likely enough we shall God willing be at Rokeby on Sunday before dinner where I trust we shall still find your Ladyship a tenant of that hospitable mansion. The poem has no faults unless I could find in my heart to wish it had a more worthy subject but I am not able to bring my mind to that point of self-denial so I can only promise to do my best to merit the encouragement your Ladyship so kindly gives me. I do not greatly fear fear [*sic*] the professed critics if I can possibly keep hold of the reading public which can only be done by an interesting narrative.¹ Ugly Meg² is a much larger drawing than any at Bothwell. On another and I think an improved plan I hope one day to exhibit it to your Ladyship at this little cottage—This is a miserable

¹ Lady Louisa's verses have for theme the expectancy of *Rokeby*.

"*Rokeby's* the word—and none that e'er
Bade Britons for the charge prepare
More swiftly passed from man to man
Or woke more ardour as it ran. . . ."

Scott's mention of the "professed critics" refers to her lines—

"As pleased (howe'er unlike the cause)
Arise reviewers, whet their claws,
Fix on the faults that must be spied,
Stretch out the treatise cut and dried,
Then rest upon their arms, and say
'Now come his poem when it may—
Our work, for form sake, must indeed
Let his take vantage and precede ;
But, an we would, how far from hard
It were to gain upon the bard,
Start with him from the printer's door,
Or leap three months and spring before ! ' "

She informs Scott that Lady Douglas has been detained from coming north, due to her anxiety about poor Captain Scott. "His wound has broken out afresh, produced an abscess in his breast, and required a surgical operation. When she wrote last week, she was going down to see him & Mrs Scott at Walmer, where they are."—*Walpole Collection*.

² A sketch by C. K. Sharpe.

business of Capt. Scotts wound especially as such accidents have often a permanent effect on the constitution.

I can add no more being interrupted by two matters of great consequence. The first is to plan out of some débris dug out of the rubbish of the Abbey at Melrose a Gothic front to a well¹—the other to buy if possible some acres of ground on a little lake about a mile from my cottage which is exactly the lake of the fisherman and Geni. Meanwhile believe me with great respect dear Lady Louisa your Ladyships much honoured and obliged humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 20th Sept. 1812

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[c. October 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—Respecting the longitude I have only to say that to comply with your anxious desire to be out by Xmas I have shortened my poem a Canto. If you can allow me six weeks or two months I can yet *though* with some awkwardness & difficulty drive it out to the original length—but otherwise it is literally *impossible*. “Have mercy mighty Duke on man of Mold.” Look at it another way—a quarter of the Lay is we know at this moment worth £500 after so many years hard *cropping* & I get £3000 for a poem of the same length *not cropd at all*. So you must admit as Geo. Faulkner said to Chesterfield there is enough for your money. Not that I should mind that if I had time to get through—but I have *not* and it will be with great exertion which I am determined to make that we get out by Xmas. I cannot carry an ounce more weight & run my race too.

¹ For further reference to this well see letter to Hartstonge, 29th October 1812, p. 185.

On the disputed line it may stand thus

Whoever finds him strike him dead

or

Who first shall find him strike him dead.

But I think the addition of *felon* or any such word will impair the strength of the passage. Oswald is too anxious to use epithets & is hollowing after the men by this time entering the wood—the simpler the line the better in my humble opinion. *Shoot him dead* was much better than any other—it implies *do not even approach him—kill him at a distance*. I leave it to you however only saying that I never shun common words when they are to the purpose.

As to your criticisms I cannot but attend to them because they usually touch passages with which I am myself discontented. I cannot make more of these four first lines though I am sensible they are not good.

W. S.

Send no proof sheets after *Monday* as they cannot reach me—& send *Monday* if at all in sure time for the post otherwise there will be miscarriage.¹

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*October 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—It will be sufficient to mention the results of Johns researches in a line or two—the full state will probably require explanations & discussions which would greatly interfere with *Rokeby* if made by letter. I shall be in town on the 11th *for certain*.

As far as mortal man may promise on such a subject I have no fear of publishing by Xmas—& Triermain as soon after as may be. I have got Webers sketch as by my last would appear.

¹ This note is at stanza 26, Canto II. of *Rokeby*.

I think the couplet may stand thus

Staindrop who from her silvan bowers
Salutes proud Raby's battled towers.¹

I dont like battled force somehow.

To day completes Canto II which will reach you to-morrow. Tomorrow is the election day which may occasion one days delay in returning proofs. Courage Milor.²

W. S.

sunday

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

DEAR JAMES,—I have read over your two letters with as much attention as a head very much confused will give me leave. I think Constables proposal merits consideration but I see two great difficulties. The first is that like most of our other folks he promises mountains which his end being gaind will shrink into molehills. I hope therefore that without any *understanding* or equivocation the terms if the thing goes forward shall be fixd by writing in complete form. But my much greater doubt is on taking a stroke so fatal to our reputation as striking sail to Constable in our own harbours. Such will every human being consider it and were it my sole concern I would rather submit to great deprivations than do so. Only think what Sir Will: Forbes will say or rather think of you. Today you beg an accomodation of £700 which he grants upon your anxious statement of a wish to keep the entire poem & tomorrow you show that this was a mere pretext by selling the said poem to Constable? How could you apply to them in any future emergency with the chance of having your statement believed. As for Constable I know him *cute tenus*

¹ These lines are in Canto II., stanza 3.

² This note is at end of Canto II. of *Rokeby*.

and you may as well believe that he will sell all he has & bestow it on the poor as give you a guinea that he can keep you out of—so do not cheat yourself by looking forward to printing or any other advantages beyond what may be the immediate consequences of the transaction. Again Longman & Co/ will *certainly* be displeased though they may not think fit to show it, untill they can make you feel it. I throw out thes[e] considerations at random but I recomend them to your deep consideration.

I must be at Dalkeith House on friday so if you call on me there on Saturday morning about eleven we can go over the bearings of this matter and you can perhaps persuade me into a better opinion of this matter than I have at present. Unless it is a thing of absolute necessity I see little short of total loss of reputation in it : which of course should be well paid for.

You may bring me the copy of the guarantee for Sir W. Forbes's house. I will not accede to Messrs. Longmans proposal—matters are come to much but not to that so I think you had better break that matter short.

Meanwhile I am truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

CHESTERS¹ 6 October [1812]

[*Signet Library*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

DEAR JAMES,—In my hasty letter from Chesters this morning perhaps I did not say pointedly enough that I should be at Dalkeith House on friday & should wish to see you there on Saturday morning about *eleven*. I intend to return by the Mail to Abbotsford that day. I want the Antiquities of Durham & Northumberld by

¹The seat of Thomas Elliot Ogilvie in Scott's day; not far from Jedburgh.

Hutchinson¹ to help on with my notes—You may rely upon my making every exertion to get forwards but consider I could not build my house in the very same time I was collecting my materials in which I have been very successful. I have a great fancy to have a touch at the battle of Otterbourne by way of Minstrelsy.

You must be aware that in stating the objections which occur to me to taking in Constable I think they ought to give way either to absolute necessity or to very strong grounds of advantage. But I am persuaded nothing ultimately good can be expected from any connection with that house unless for those who have a mind to be hewers of wood & drawers of water. I should have thought some share of Marmion a good thing in the balance. But we will talk the matter coolly over & in the mean while perhaps you could see Sir W. Forbes or W. Erskine & learn what impression this odd union is like to make among your freinds. Erskine is sound-headed and quite to be trusted with your whole story. I must own that short of necessity to which I always defer I can hardly think the purchase of the registers equal to the loss of credit & character which your surrender will be conceived to infer. What has happend to make your expectations respecting the register worse than usual? ²

¹ William Hutchinson (1732-1814), topographer. *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*. 3 vol. S. Hodgson: Newcastle, 1785-94. 40., and *A view of Northumberland wrth an excursion to the Abbey of Mailrose in Scotland*. (*Ancient customs which prevail in the county of Northumberland, etc.*) 2 vol. W. Charnley: Newcastle, 1778. 40.

² Scott had very reluctantly "made up his mind to open . . . a negotiation with Constable, as involved a complete exposure of the mismanagement of John Ballantyne's business as a publisher. . . . James . . . had proposed asking Constable to take a share both in *Rokeby* and in the *Annual Register*. . . . At the time . . . Scott no doubt anticipated that *Rokeby* would have success not less decisive than the *Lady of the Lake*; but in this expectation . . . he had been disappointed."—LOCKHART.

This is the first note of the storm in which John B. & Co. were to go under. Constable's proposal I have not seen, but he evidently reported James's proposal to Cadell, then in Dublin, who writes on the 15th October: "I cannot say I feel much concern that nothing has taken place with Ballantynes, having great doubts if we could have remained

Mrs. Scott complains you have never said if her milliner was paid or her ticket drawn in the lottery.

You may show this letter to Erskine if you like it. Yours truly

W SCOTT

JEDBURGH *Wednesday* [6 October, 1812]

Do not write as I am moving about & cannot have your letter.

[*Glen*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

BOLD HESKETS, ESQ., ROSAL,¹ PRESTON, LANCASHIRE

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I have this morning returned from Dalkeith House to which I was whisked amid the fury of an election tempest and I found your letter with the bill inclosed which of course I immediately acknowledge as among cross posts such documents sometimes perish from the way. I sincerely hope this accommodation to me has put you to no inconvenience—more on such a subject cannot be said among friends who give each other credit for feeling as they ought.

We peregrinated over Stainmore and visited the castles of Bowes Brough Appleby and Brougham with great interest. Lest our spirit of chivalry thus excited should lack employment we found ourselves that is *I* did at Carlisle engaged in the service of two distressed ladies being no other than our friends Lady Douglas and Lady Louisa who overtook us there and who would have had great trouble in finding quarters the election being in full vigour if we had not anticipated their distress and secured a private house capable of holding us all. Some distress occurred I believe among the waiting damsels whose case I had not so carefully considered for I heard

long on decent terms with them, whatever profit may arise from being engaged in Mr Scott's Poems is considerably lessened by the stipulations such a connection may have brought us under, putting the idea of supporting a tottering establishment out of the question. I have no doubt the reasons for nothing being done are of the soundest nature."

¹ Rossall Hall, four miles south of Preston.

a sentimental exclamation "Am I to sleep with the greyhounds?" which I conceived to proceed from Lady Douglas's suivante from the exquisite sensibility of tone with which it was uttered—especially as I had beheld the fair one descend from the carriage with three half bound volumes of a novel in her hand. Not having it in my power to alleviate [her woes] by offering her either a part or the whole of my own couch transeat quoth I cum cæteris erroribus.

I am delighted with your Cumberland admirer¹ and give him credit for his visit to the Vindicator of Homer.² But you misssd one of another description who passd Rokeby with great regret I mean General John Malcolm—the Persian envoy the Delhi Resident, the poet the warrior the politician and the borderer. He is really a fine fellow. I met him at Dalkeith and we returnd together he has just left me after drinking his coffee. A fine time we had of it talking of Troy town and Babel and Persepolis and Delhi and Langholm and Burnfoot with all manner of episodes about Iskendar Rustan and Johnie Armstrong. Do you know that poem of Ferdusi's must be beautiful. He read me some very splendid extracts which he had himself translated. Should you meet him in London I have given him charge to be acquainted with you for I am sure you will like each other. To be sure I know him little but I like his frankness and his sound ideas of morality and policy and I have uniformly observed that when I have had no great liking to persons at the beginning it has usually pleased heaven as Slender says to decrease it on further acquaintance. Adieu I must mount my [horse]. Our last

¹ This alludes to "a ridiculous hunter of lions, who being met by Mr. Morritt in the grounds at Rokeby, disclaimed all taste for picturesque beauties, but overwhelmed their owner with Homeric Greek; of which he had told Scott."—LOCKHART.

² Morritt had published *A Vindication of Homer and of the Ancient Poets and Historians who have recorded the Siege and Fall of Troy* (1798) and *Additional Remarks on the Topography of Troy, in answer to Mr. Bryant's last Publications* (1800).

journey was so delightful that we have every temptation to repeat it. Our young folks talk of nothing but Rokeby and Mrs. Morritts kindness. Pray give our kind love to the said lady and believe me ever yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 11 *October* [1812]

[*Law*]

To JOANNA BAILLIE

YOUR sketch my dear Miss Baillie is admirably calculated for your wonderful power of illustrating human passion. There are however two points which I think will require consideration. The first is how to prevent the Audience from anticipating the conclusion with that sort of certainty which banishes the interest excited by suspense. This I always think of the last consequence and whether you can do it by leaving the *fact* in doubt namely who was the real perpetrator of the murder, or by leaving the intention of Henriquez dubious till the last moment which would be much the finer and more interesting ambiguity I think if possible you should bend the tale so far as to prevent the catastrophe from being early visible. This is a difficulty which I am sure your genius can easily overcome because you have conquered so much greater and it is one which probably I should not have discovered saving in the bare outline of the story. But for the same reason and under the same qualification I would also observe my second difficulty which refers only to representation and that in the present state of the stage. I mean the difficulty of giving reality and dignity to judicial proceedings on the stage. We have not as on the better regulated stage of Paris respectable second rate actors who finding their talents inadequate to fill the first rank in their profession wisely content themselves with applying their powers to parts within their reach and failing as lovers and heroes succeed admirably as Dukes

Kings Judges and so forth. These parts indeed are filld upon our stage because they must be filld but it is with discontented and disappointed Hamlets and Richards and Romeos who revenge themselves on the public by *walking through* characters better suited to their powers than to their ambition. I suppose it is as being a lawyer that the deficiency particularly strikes me in judicial matters which heaven knows are serious enough any where else but have from the circumstance I have noticed or some other which I am unable to detect a rather ludicrous effect on the stage. The scene in the Merchant of Venice is a notable exception but it is because the weight is in that case thrown upon Portia the principal character. With a view therefore to acting it might be necessary to give some weight and consequence to the character of the King before introducing him as arbiter of the fate of the heroe.

The time I conceive would apply pretty well to the reign of Ferdinand of Castile previous to the conquest of Grenada when expeditions against the Hagarenes were favourite amusements of the Spanish Nobles.¹ By approaching so late a period you are entitled to tinge the manners of chivalry with a stronger infusion of letters and civilization than would be quite compatible with those of an earlier period. Should you want a subordinate retainer as an assistant assassin pray look at the account of the Almogarves or some such name in the notes to Southey's *Cid*.² They are a highly poetical and picturesque kind of persons Woggarwolfs in their way but with a national character and habits peculiar to themselves. It is a description of soldiers which has revived among the Guerillas.

¹ All this refers presumably to a sketch for Joanna Baillie's *Henriquez : a Tragedy in Five Acts*, which evidently formed one of the third series of *Plays on the Passions*, published in 1812. Vandenhoff appeared in it at Drury Lane. The action of the play is the beginning of the thirteenth century.

² See Notes on the Almogavars in Book V, p. 141, of Southey's translation of *Chronicle of the Cid, from the Spanish*. London : 1808.

I shall be impatient to know what you make of this fine tale and I exhort you to go on and pro[s]per. I mention without scruple the difficulties that occur to me and the more readily because I have no doubt of your eluding or conquering them. I reinclose the sketch that you may lose no time in your labours.

As for Rokeby I am now working at [it] in my old Cossack manner after destroying a whole canto in which I attempted refinement and elegance. I have revisited the scenery and fortunately met good weather. My eldest boy and girl went with Mrs. Scott and me and as we crossed and recrossed and quartered the border counties, I think they heard border history enough to sicken them of it for their whole lives. My boy on his little pony rode about five-and-twenty miles a day with me without being fatigued and was sometimes relieved by his sister.

I am sorry the *Quarterly Revw.* has been savage on Mrs. Barbauld¹ for whose talents I have had long and sincere respect. But I cannot condemn the principle of their criticism and I imagine Mrs. B. herself will admit that it will be long ere the renown of Lord Wellington is eclipsed by that of General Hull.² In fact, I detest croaking if true it is unpatriotic and if false worse. As to my simple self, I am sensible of the value of Mrs. Barbauld's *own* approbation but I would were it in my power blow up the ruins of Melrose Abbey and burn all the nonsensical rhimes I ever wrote if I thought either the one or other could survive the honor or independence of my country. My only ambition is to be remembered if remembered at all as one who knew and valued national independence and would maintain it in the present struggle to the last man and the last guinea though the

¹ A very drastic criticism of Mrs. Barbauld's poem, *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven*, had appeared in No. 14 of the *Quarterly*.

² "An American general whose strategy had not been successful in the invasion of Canada, July 1812."—*F.L.*

last guinea were my own property and the last man my own son.¹

To a more pleasing subject our little improvements get on here pretty well. I have a noble spring which I have enclosed and covered with a gothick front formd out of some of the broken stones found in the rubbish of Melrose Abbey when the old church was removed. It is on the side of a steep bank and I intend that willows and weeping birches shall droop over it with a background of ever-greens and as there was moss put between the junctions of the stones and the lime was carefully blackend it will not have a modern appearance in the least. In the bank which stretches along our haugh I have planted various trees and fringed the whole with shrubs. I have also planted many thousand acorns which begin to make a great show the future oaks being nearly as tall as your knitting needle. I wanted to sow birch with them but found it difficult or rather impossible to get good seed which is extraordinary as this is certainly the country of birches.

We are now in the fury of a contested election for Roxburghshire which will turn on a very narrow majority either way which must be my apology for not bestowing all my tediousness on you as Dogberry says—the freeholders you know are entitled to their share. Charlotte sends kind love to Miss A. Baillie and you and believe me ever most faithfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 11 October 1812

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

¹“ In her poem Mrs. Barbauld presaged the decadence of this country and the increase of America in arts, arms, and virtue. See *Quarterly Review*, vol. vii. p. 311.”—*F.L.*

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—To replace the lost engraving I now send a good drawing of Dean Swift from an original painting never engraved.¹ I trust you will give the artist directions to take good care of it and return safely to me in case you should think of inserting it. If otherwise you will of course be so good as to return it. I am Dear Sir your obedt. Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 12 October [1812]

[*Kilpatrick*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

NOTHING my dear Miss Baillie can give me so much pride and pleasure as your approbation. I fear however you judge of the first sheet of Rokeby rather by your own vivid conceptions of the manner in which it may be possible to fill up such a sketch than from a just appreciation of my powers and therefore I am sorry you have seen any part of [it] before the whole 1st Canto which I intend to send you so soon as finishd. I have written to Longman to put him on his guard as to extending his communications as in truth I would have thanked him to have allowd me the pleasure of sending you the sheets myself though the encouragement I have from your sisterly approbation saves him a tight scolding which I

¹ Writing to Constable from Dublin on the 20th October Cadell says: "As to Swift's Works and a Portrait of him, I have seen Mr Scott's friend Mr Hartstonge once or twice, only a few days [ago when] I called on him, he had dispatched to Mr Scott the Castle a half length copy of an Original Portrait of the Dean, which I should hope will do for the frontispiece, and there is now preparing another copy of an original Picture which I take charge of. Mr Hartstonge has been most minutely attentive to everything to aid the edition now in hand, and I will also get from him several original letters and a good many Papers never before published which will all be of service in the Life, the Portrait is now in the hands of an eminent Painter here for the purpose of taking the Copy." A letter of Hartstonge of 22nd October shows that the artist employed was a Mr. Cumming. The drawing of the first portrait, which Scott is sending, was by Burgess.

can lay on as well as any one. I am certain you will form an idea so much beyond what I can execute that the poem will dissappoint you. This however I should the less care for since I know your friendship would make some apology for me but Mr Longman may extend his confidence to others who have neither the same inclination nor good sense to make allowance and I am between ourselves a little displeased with my friend Mr Ballantyne for having given him an opportunity of being either discreet or indiscreet upon the occasion, as I know no business any bookseller has with a book till it is completed for his counter or ware-room.

Were I desperately jealous of poetical fame I know nothing would make me so fidgetty as your praises because I take the greater part as a sort of payment beforehand which I shall find it very difficult to meet. But *forty* and upward has brought me the wisdom to say with Corporal Nym "things must be as they may" and I feel a strong conviction that I am like the volunteer regiments whom a fortnights drill brought uniformly and rapidly to a certain degree of discipline and whom a twelvemonths did not carry beyond it. So under this conviction Rokeby is proceeding at the moderate rate of 100 lines a day allowing two hours for walking or coursing.

As for our popularity the difference is this I use small shot which spreads among the covey and wounds a dozen slightly you fire a single ball which perhaps only hits one out of the twelve but affects that one like lightning and thunder. Your knowledge of human nature and comprehension of human passions has the accuracy and research of the first rate paintings but the vulgar are more struck with a blustering sketch or two than with the traits which go to compose a highly finishd picture. Had Shakespeare lived just now assuredly his vivacity and picturesque powers might have secured him some favourable notice even from the Edinr. Review but do you think the soliloquy of Hamlet or the speech of Jaques would have met with

quarter. In fact these with some modern efforts are cases in which the vulgar must be taught what they are to admire, must have the excellencies of the picture dissected and pointed out to them and alas who is disposed to take that trouble for a contemporary.

I wrote a long letter from Rokeby wt. the sketch of the story which I hope you have received some time since. In a few days you will receive as Dogberry says all my tediousness of Canto I. I have only to add that if the Ministers dispark Windsor forest I will turn Whig and stand for Westminster. Ever yours affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 16 October [1812]

[*Scott-Baillie*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

DEAR JAMES,—A thing has happend which greatly surprizes and vexes me. I find Longman has a copy of the first sheet of Rokeby and is shewing it to his literary freinds in London. Both John and you know my absolute and perempt objections to any one having any part of the proofs but myself and I own I wonder equally at his presuming to take such a liberty and at his being supplied *contrary to my express wish* with the means of doing so.¹ The person to whom he exercised this confidence was one to whom I should certainly have made any confidence that would have given pleasure. But that is nothing to the purpose as I do no[t] wish Mr. Longman or Mr. Anybody to have the power of selecting confidents as to the nature of my literary engagements. And I desire that not a single sheet may go out of your hands to any one whatsoever except by my express direction & this extends as well to your American correspondents as to any one else. You will understand this to be a serious and standing order.

¹ For the system of proof-sheets adopted by Ballantyne's printing-office see *The Ballantyne Press* (1909), pp. 85-87.

I shall write to Longman myself upon this matter which will probably cost me the cancelling the sheet and writing it over again.

I return the proof sheet in which you will find most of your corrections attended to as usual. I find them highly useful. I have got Johns Atlas—it is too small for me but will help out a little with the sketches I took on the spot.

I shall send the end of Canto I & beginning of II on Sunday as Mrs. Scott insists on my coursing tomorrow for the wholesome— I trust the press will not now stand a minute still. Yours truly W. S.

ABBOTSFORD 16 October [1812].

N.B. The three sheets last sent were written in three days.

[*Signet Library*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*Autumn 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—It is fit you should know that I have drawn on John Ballantyne & Co/ of date 19th. Curt. at 3 months for £150⁰ to the order of Messrs. Sanderson & Paterson of Galashiels. John you know is to have the temporary use of my funds to pay my tradesfolks & I am to give drats. on him.

On Thursday I set out for Rokeby & as I sleep that night at Edgerstane I wish you would send me under cover to John Rutherford Esq M.P. Edgerstane by Jedburgh the first sheet or two of Triermain so as to connect what I have on the slips. Running copy of Rokeby must be kept up by sending double proofs otherwise prepare for fearful cancels & blunders. I hope you have spoke to Mr Kerr of Post office. I hope to send to the end of Canto I before I set out. Yours truly

Sunday

W. S.

Let me know what you think of Sheet B.

[*Signet Library*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

[Autumn 1812]

DEAR JOHN,—I send you som[e] of 2d vol. Triermain. I cannot help thinking that if this was judiciously thrown in Rees way (being first copied in a strange hand & set up) it would facilitate any of your negociations. Not that I would propose it as the subject of acceptance but only put it in his way. He certainly would see it was not moonshine at least.

You never told me what was done about Mr. Sass's proposals. I wish you would ask Rees to countenance them. Yrs truly

W S

I intend to push on Paul & these poems at once.

[Signet Library]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR SHARPE,—There is no occasion for taking out anything in the premises & I send you the volume with the certainty of getting better acquainted with it by your report than ever I should have patience to do by my own inspection. I return at the same time your own curious pamphlets. If you have a copy of [*Histoires tragiques?*]¹ which you quote so well in your poems I should be glad of a peep to compleat a leaf of mine which is imperfect.

I should like of all things to have the song which suggested the celebrated Cantata of Swift. Ever my dear Charles Yours must truly

W. S.

[1812]

[Hornel]

¹ Matteo Bandello's *Histoires tragiques*, etc. (*Continuation des histoires . . . mises en langue Française, par F. de Belleforest.*) 2 tom. Paris, 1559.

TO [LIONEL THOMAS BERGUER]¹

SIR,—I am honored with your letter, and am highly flattered by a gentleman of your classical attainments having found pleasure in my poetical attempts, and having thought any part of them worthy of the beautiful latin dress you have honored my highland damsel with.

I fear I shall lose in your good opinion, by frankly confessing that I am unable to give any satisfactory solution as to the two lines, tho' my attention has been frequently called to them by similar enquiries. My poetry has always passed from the desk to the press in the most hurried manner possible, so that it is no wonder I am sometimes puzzled to explain my own meaning.

In the present case, protesting always that I shall have the benefit of any better explanation which a friendly commentator may find out for me; I incline to think that I must have confused the night-shade with hemlock, used you know, for the execution of criminals, and so far therefore an emblem of punishment; and that the foxglove from its determined erect figure and decisive colour, might be no bad emblem of pride.

I am afraid this will hardly satisfy my fair admirer, being one degree worse than Bardolph's solution of the word "accommodate."

Indeed I have sometimes thought of altering or omitting

¹ On 15th October Berguer had written that, being a great reader and admirer of Scott's works, several of his friends had from time to time consulted him about various passages in them. "A young lady wrote to me the other day, asking for my explanation of the 2 lines under-written; and simple as I am convinced they must be, I have not positively been able, yet, to return any answer.

Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride.

If you will have the condescension to help me out, I shall hold myself infinitely obliged—for my young friend, who thinks me a *great Critic*, has quite put me to the blush. In the meantime, if you will not hold your poem degraded by my attempt, may I hope to amuse you with a few lines of Latin verse of the first Canto of the *Lady of the Lake*? . . . If neither my freedom, nor my verses, please you, you can give me to oblivion, and *those*—*emendationis ignibus*."—*Walpole Collection*. See letter to Mr. Mayo, 3rd August (c. 1811), vol. ii. pp. 522-23.

the lines, which are nonsense as they stand, but I have always forgot to do so, and esteem myself fortunate in my negligence, since it has procured me the honor of your correspondence. I am sir, your obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE, *October 20, 1812.*

[*Willis's Current Notes*]

TO REV. GEORGE CRABBE ¹

ABBOTSFORD BY MELROSE, *October 21st [1812]*

DEAR SIR,—I am just honoured with your letter, which gives me the more sensible pleasure, since it has gratified a wish of more then twenty years standing. It is, I think fully that time since I was, for great part of a very snowy winter, the inhabitant of an old house in the country in a course of patient study, so very like that of your admirably painted Young Poet, that I could hardly help saying that's me when I was reading the tale to my family. Among the very few books which fell under my hands was a volume or two of Dodsley's Register, one of which contained copious

¹ This is the first letter in the correspondence between Scott and Crabbe. It would seem that Scott had already written, for in his letter of 13th October (to which this letter is a reply) the English poet mentions receiving two letters via Mr. Hatchard. "In both you mention my verses in such terms that it would be affected in me were I to deny and I think, unjust if I were to conceal the pleasure you gave me : I am indeed highly gratified." After saying he has long wanted to know Scott through the agency of a common friend, that he is confined near his home by duties and sickness, he runs on : "Certainly if I know myself but in a moderate degree I truly rejoice in your success and while I am entertaining in my way a certain set of readers for the most part probably of peculiar turn and habit, I can with pleasure trace the effect you produce on all. Mr Hatchard in a late letter tells me that he hopes or expects that thousands will read my Tales and I am convinced that your Publisher in like Manner might speak of your ten thousands, but this though it calls to mind the passage is no true comparison with the related prowess of David and Saul because I have no evil Spirit to arise and trouble me on the Occasion, though if I had I know no David whose skill is so likely to soothe and allay it."—*Walpole Collection.*

extracts from *The Village* and *The Library*,¹ particularly the conclusion of book I of the former, and an extract from the latter, beginning with the description of the old Romancers—I committed them most faithfully to my memory where your verses must have felt themselves very strangely lodged in company with ghost stories, Border riding ballads scraps of old plays and all the miscellaneous stuff which a strong appetite for reading with neither means nor discrimination for selection had assembled in the head of a lad of eighteen. New publications, at that time, were very scarce in Edinburgh and my means of procuring them very limited so that after a long search for the poems which contained these beautiful specimens and which had afforded me so much delight I was fain to rest contented with the extracts from the *Register* which I could repeat at this moment. You may therefore guess my sincere delight when I saw your poems at a later period assume the rank in the public estimation which they so well deserve. It was a triumph to my own immature taste to find I had anticipated the applause of the learned and of the critical and I became very desirous indeed to offer my *gratulor* among the more important plaudits which you have had from every quarter. I should certainly have availed myself of the freemasonry of authorship—for our trade may claim to be a mystery as well as Abhorson's)—to address for you a copy of a new poetical attempt, which I have now upon the anvil, and I esteem myself particularly obliged to Mr. Hatchard and to your goodness acting upon his information for giving me an opportunity of paving the way for such a freedom.

I am too proud of the compliments you honour me with even to affect to decline them and with respect to the comparative view I have of my own

¹ *The Village* 1783, *The Library* 1781. Extracts from each were printed in the respective years in Dodsley's *Annual Register*. Scott must have come on them at Rosebank in 1788-9.

labours and yours I can only assure you that none of my little folks about the formation of whose taste and principles I may be supposed naturally solicitous have ever read any of my own poems while yours have been our regular evening's amusement. My eldest girl begins to read well and enters as well into the humour as into the sentiment of your admirable descriptions of human life—As for rivalry I think it has seldom existed among those who know by experience that there are much better things in the world than literary reputation and that one of the best of these good things is the regard and friendship of those deservedly and generally esteemed for their work or their talents. I believe many dilettanti authors do cocker themselves up into a great jealousy of any thing that interferes with what they are pleased to call their fame but I should as soon think of nursing one of my own fingers into a whitloe for my private amusement, as encouraging such a feeling.

I am truly sorry to observe you mention bad health : those who contribute so much to the improvement as well as the delight of society should escape this evil. I hope however that one day your state of health may permit you to visit this country—I have very few calls to London but it will greatly add to the interest of those which may occur that you will permit me the honour of waiting upon you in my journey, and assuring you in person of the early admiration and sincere respect with which I have the honour to be, dear Sir, your obliged humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

[*Brotherton*]

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[Extract]

[28th October 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—I send you to-day better than the third sheet of Canto II., and I trust to send the other three

sheets in the course of the week. I expect that you will have three cantos complete before I quit this place—on the 11th of November. Surely, if you do your part, the poem may be out by Christmas; but you must not daudle over your typographical scruples. I have too much respect for the public to neglect any thing in my poem to attract their attention; and you misunderstood me much, when you supposed that I designed any new experiments in point of composition. I only meant to say, that knowing well that the said public will never be pleased with exactly the same thing a second time, I saw the necessity of giving a certain degree of novelty, by throwing the interest more on *character* than in my former poems, without certainly meaning to exclude either incident or description. I think you will see the same sort of difference taken in all my former poems, of which I would say, if it is fair for me to say any thing, that the force in the Lay is thrown on style, in Marmion on description, and in the Lady of the Lake on incident.

[*Scott's Poetical Works*, 1833-34 edition, vol. ix, p. 1]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR SIR,—I am inexpressibly obliged by your various packets which first and last have arrived safely altho I have been straggling from home and very lately returned so that I only received them a short time ago. The Deans portrait is in the hands of I trust a good engraver to ornament the edition which owes so much to your unintermitted and successful exertions. I am yet hanging on mine oars as to the Life being both desirous of collecting the last scraps of information & also of finishing the works before printing the first Volume—I have moreover on my hands the achievement of a certain poem called Rokeby of which I hope to send you a copy about Xmas, and above all I am now writing in that very focus of that social Volcano a contested election.

I am not naturally apt to dabble deep in such matters but in this case my kind friend the Duke of Buccleugh has taken a deep interest so clanship and friendship and gratitude for no ordinary strain of kindness oblige me to take a more active part than I should otherwise be inclined to do. My other employments this summer have been of a kind more congenial to my later habits for having been bred a Lawyer strife of all kinds must have been consonant to my early occupation. I have just finished a well constructed out of a few of the broken stones taken up in clearing the rubbish from Melrose Abbey at removing the modern church. It makes a tolerable deception and looks at least 300 years old. In honor of an old Melrose saint I have put an inscription in a Gothic Latin verse AVE, AVE, SANCTE. WALDAVE. I have been besides planting & inclosing & building (not a house but some offices) and riding to collect my scattered recollections [*sic*] of the localities of Rokeby and also to collect votes for my friend Mr. Don. I do not make any apology for ballasting this parcel with a poem¹ which I may be well proud of, as the proverb says that pride in poets is no sin. But your partiality for the subject will at once excuse my sending it and my supposing it may interest you though by the way you may have seen it in the Annual Register.² I am of course anxious to come well off with Rokeby, particularly with my young Irishman whom I suppose to have been made prisoner during Tyrones business while a child and adopted into an English family. He retains his early habits and predilections softened by a civilized education and I ought to be able to make him very amiable. But the Devil is, that your true Lover notwithstanding the high and aristocratic rank he inherits in romance and in poetry is in my opinion the dullest of human mortals, unless to his mistress—I know nothing I dread more in poetry than a Love scene

¹ Probably *The Poacher*, written in imitation of Crabbe in 1811.

² *Annual Register*, 1809.

unless it be a *battle which is equally unmanageable*.— I will be delighted to have the second portrait of the Dean though really I know not how to acknowledge these multiplied favours— Constable will determine on the propriety of engraving it and if he follows my opinion certainly in the affirmative—. Pray when you next favour me with a few lines let me know what is become of your vexatious suit—aground I fear like Robinson Crusoes boat but not with the same chance of floating next tide—these delays in Chancery are real grievances. I must not omit to tell you that the acorns are sprouting : those set in the Spring have been more fortunate than those of the Autumn which the mice have devoured without mercy but some which Mrs. Scott set with her own hands in May on a look out spot which the children call the Spy Law are already six inches long. Pray observe this if you ever plant acorns, of 100 planted in Autumn not ten have come up, of the same number in April & May not 30 have failed—I observe the mouse never touches them after they begin to germinate which in a good spring is so soon almost as planted whereas in winter the vermin fairly stormed all the places in which they were planted rooted them out and eat them. Adieu my dear Sir our Election comes on Monday and I am full of claims of enrollment objections answers and the whole panoply of a Legal Partizan. Mrs. Scott begs her kind remembrance ever yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 29th October [1812]

Our post town is Melrose but *Edinburgh* is at all times my safest direction. My poor little terrier Wallace¹ is dead to our great vexation.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ R. P. Gillies has two references to this dog in his *Recollections of Sir Walter Scott*. Commenting on Scott's habit of early rising, he adds : "He used to say that he owed much to the 'exemplary character and admonitions of his friend Wallace,' a little wiry-haired and ill-favoured terrier, who was

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE ¹

[October-November 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—I return the sheet.

Lathom House, Baring House & others were valiantly attacked & defended during the civil war so the phrase is of the period.

The abruptness as to the song is unavoidable—the music of the drinking party could only operate as a sudden interruption to Bertrams however naturally it might be introduced among the foresters who were at some distance.

Fain in old English & Scotch expresses I think a propensity to give & receive pleasurable emotions a sort of fondness which may without harshness I think be applied to a rose in the act of blooming. You remember

Jocky fou & Jenny fain

W. S.

Dont forget the Vision.²

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

at this time his constant companion and prime favourite.” Again, at the time Scott was working at *Don Roderick*, Gillies found him in his library “writing as busily as possible. ‘Look here,’ said he, ‘I have just begun to copy out the rhymes that you heard to-day. . . . To-morrow morning . . . I shall have eight or ten more stanzas complete; and so will soon arrive at the extent of my tether. Return to supper, if you can; only don’t be late, as you perceive we keep early hours, and Wallace will not suffer me to rest after six in the morning. Come, good dog, and help the poet.’ At this hint, Wallace seated himself upright on a chair next his master, who offered him a newspaper, which he directly seized, looking very wise, and holding it firmly and contentedly in his mouth. Scott looked at him with great satisfaction, for he was excessively fond of dogs. ‘Very well,’ said he, ‘now we shall get on.’”

¹ The following eight letters to Ballantyne are undated, but I have grouped them together under October-November, as throughout these months *Rokeby* was undergoing a hurried preparation for Christmas publication.

² This note refers to proof at commencement of Canto III. of *Rokeby*

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[October-November 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—I return the sheet. I cannot amplify the conversation in the last stanza but I have in part obviated your objections by giving the first six lines to Denzil.

What is thy name then quoth Robin Hood
Come tell me without any fail
By the faith of my body then said the young man
My name it is Allen a dale.

I am afraid this scrap of poetry will touch your but[t] of sack.

W. S.

I must now send Morritt the running sheets down to Canto IV to get some local explanations. Will you get them gatherd & stitcd for me forthwith—also forget not Fanny West.¹

[Abbotsford Copies]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[November 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—I return the sheet. Redmond is not said to have thrown *away* but to have thrown *down* his sword which is always restored to captives of rank.

I do not think the equivocal meaning of the word *fearful* injures the passage where it occurs.

As to the *flask*, it adds not apology certainly but probability to Morthams conduct. Other blunders are corrected.

W. S.

Your verbal objection I cannot give weight to. People disturbed in mind write madness as well as speak it.²

[Abbotsford Copies]

¹ Note at the close of Canto III. of *Rokeby*.

² Note at stanza 16 of Canto IV. of *Rokeby*.

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[November 1812]

WHAT you say is very true but the interview could not be handsomely placed directly before the readers eyes. I shall have another sheet ready this morning. Hourra! your most serene highness.¹

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[November 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—People in a thicket often *hear* when they cant see. I might dwell on this at length but there is I think neither use nor time in doing so. I have made some change however to meet your objection. I cannot change the word *flung* for the simple reason there is no other word to express the idea & that it seems a word of exceeding good command. You who drive a gig may be prejudiced.

I send some copy for notes (which seem to me lag) as well as for copy. You will oblige me by keeping up the notes which will save hurrying the poetry.²

W. S.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[November 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—I adhere to my own reading. *Still* is a very common substantive—& I like the passage better as it now stands about the glass—as to the fire I had in my eye what you point at but it cannot be supposed that any effort of Bertrams could have set the building in such sudden conflagration unless it had been made of paper.

¹ Note at end of stanza 23 of Canto IV. of *Rokeby*.

² Note about stanza 25 of Canto IV. of *Rokeby*.

I will consider whether anything can be yet made of it. I was aware the fire would fall short of your expectations, & therefore introduced it with much reluctance.¹

W. S.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*November 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—I am glad Terry likes the fire. I am not reconciled to it & begin to think it a vulgar incident especially since last night's exhibition. By the way if it be Siddons' last bowstring it is not fit to be strung to a two penny watch.

If the dubious lines remain the line must be general "the Castle is on fire." Any fire kindled by Bertram must have begun in the Hall. You are wrong about the lattices the bursting of a fire through the roof is usually its last operation—besides a Barons hall rarely rose to the top of the building. After the word "spears" on the first p. of next sheet 2L. add this couplet to the sally of Bertram.

Round his left arm his mantle trussed
Of lances three received the thrust
But nought his matchless strength withstood &c

I send 30 lines to help out next proof.²

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ Note on stanza 31 of Canto V. of *Rokeby*.

² Note to stanza 36 of Canto V. of *Rokeby*. The copyist adds: "Date Decr 1812, as the fire alluded to was Bishopsland High St which exhibited a wonderful conflagration. . . . Sir Walter went to the Calton hill to see it."

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[November 1812]

DEAR JAMES,—If there is yet *locus penitentie* pray adopt the following corrections in sheet 2S. Yours truly

W. S.

p. 323 line 1 & 2 read thus

A life-times schemes in vain essay'd
Are bursting on 'their artist's head.

p. 327 line 5 read thus

Had more of laughter than of moan.¹

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[Extract]

[3rd November 1812]

As for my story, the conduct of the plot, which must be made natural and easy, prevents my introducing any thing light for some time. You must advert, that in order to give poetical effect to any incident, I am often obliged to be much longer than I expected in the detail. You are too much like the country squire in the what d'ye call it, who commands that the play should not only be a tragedy and comedy, but that it should be crowned with a spice of your pastoral. As for what is popular, and what people like, and so forth, it is all a joke. *Be interesting* ; do the thing well, and the only difference will be, that people will like what they never liked before, and will like it so much the better for the novelty of their feelings towards it. Dulness and tameness are the only irreparable faults.

[*Scott's Poetical Works*, 1833-4 edition, vol. ix, p. 2]

¹ Note on stanzas 31 and 33, of Cantó VI. of *Rokeby*.

TO MISS C. RUTHERFORD

MY DEAR MISS CHRISTY,—I am very much obliged to you for sending me the very satisfactory news from India. It gives me the most sincere pleasure as every thing must do that can contribute to your comfort & happiness. Never bestow a thought upon the £400—it is quite at your service principal & interest as long as ever you please and it is a real pleasure to me to be of service to you. Genl. Malcolm (himself a very fine fellow) gives an admirable character of James Russell which I am sure is well deserved. I send you a packet design'd to have gone by Frelings fly—but lo! the fly went not and to the downfall of our little project & particularly to Charlottes disappointment back came the parcel.

The counsellor spends the day here and will take care of this letter. I am return'd from the election as sulky as a Bear with a headache, for we were most completely beaten—lost the day by seven. I had only two topics of consolation—the one that Raeburn whom the Tods had instigated to the unnatural attempt of running down my vote sunk his own in the attempt— So the disappoint'd squire return'd on his grey palfrey over Lilliards Edge voteless and disconsolate—This comes of being a cats paw to scratch your friends—The said Raeburn in indiscreet zeal was not unwilling to have perjured himself concerning some old transactions between my father and him but I had fortunately a writing which his friends did not advise him to place his oath in opposition to— If he had sworn (which he was most anxious to do) Newgate or the pillory would have been the word— My other comfort is that Don spoke most exceedingly well—as much so as any orator I ever heard in my life & with great propriety while Elliot made but a stammer of it.

Rokeby comes on very fast—two cantos are printed which you shall see when I come to town. This event will take place on the 11th. I shall grudge to leave

Abbotsford which begins to have a Christian appearance—though it is still a poor naked Christian. Charlotte sends all kind remembrances to Jane & sisters. Ever yours affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 3d Novr. 1812

[Miss Mary Lockhart]

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO

EDINBURGH 16 Nov. 1812

MY DEAR SIR,—I regret most extremely that my absence from Edinburgh should have occasioned the delay of which you most justly complain, but which, not having been here for six months, I had it not in my power to prevent. I only returned the day before yesterday, and have been since engaged in official attendance on the election of our Scottish Peers, where we are returning officers. I will not delay a moment returning the MS. As I have no criticism to offer, which can, in the slightest degree, affect your feelings, I can have no hesitation to state the only circumstance which, I think, may possibly interfere with the popularity of “The Minstrel”; which is, its being founded upon the plan of another poet, which has been long before the public in the shape of a fragment.¹ In reading a fragment, the mind naturally forms some sketch of its probable conclusion, and is more or less displeased, however unreasonably, with a conclusion which shocks and departs from its own preconceptions; and it is to this feeling that I am tempted to ascribe the failure of almost all attempts, which I can recollect, to continue a well-known poem or story. But,

¹ See Scott's letter to Polwhele of 1st December 1811. Scott was negotiating with the Ballantynes for the publication of this poem. “I shall have the utmost pleasure in attending the progress of your poem through the press, and doing all in my power to give it celebrity.” The Ballantynes hesitated because it was not an original work, but a continuation of Beattie's *Minstrel*. See Polwhele's *Traditions and Recollections*, ii. 645.

although this is, in my opinion, a radical objection to the plan you have adopted, yet your plan is carried on with so much poetical spirit and talent, that it would never have weighed with me in advising that the publication of the poem should be delayed ; and, had matters stood with my friendly booksellers as they did this time twelvemonth, I am certain they would have considered the adventure as a very favourable speculation. But the state of the commercial world, in every branch, is at present such as necessarily compels all prudent persons rather to get rid of the stock now on their hands, than to make additions to it even under the most favourable circumstances.

I have not seen the bibliopolists since I came to town, but will call in upon them to-day, to get your valuable manuscript, and to enquire into the progress of the " Village School." ¹

On coming here, I find the manuscript has been sent, which I regret, as I would certainly have gone over it with more attention than in my former cursory view.

I send the " Lay " to ballast this scrawl, and am ever yours most truly,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott, 1832*]

TO CLARKE WHITFIELD

EDINBURGH 16 Nov [1812]

DEAR SIR,—Above you have two more songs from Rokeby. I have only to say the first is by the same character with that which I sent you some time ago. The other, which, if an Author may be permitted to say so much, I like as much as any song I have ever attempted, is sung by a dissipated young man engaged among a band of robbers rather by the influence of bad habits &

¹ *The Deserted Village School*, which Polwhele had published anonymously in 1812.

bad company than by natural depravity. He is however light and perfectly without steady principle, and the tone of his poetry is supposed to hover between a feeling of remorse and regret, and a desire to pass off jollily under his present condition. I should be glad I could so express myself as to enable you to comprehend my meaning, but being quite unmusical I can only say the tune should have a mixture of wild lightness & melancholy, capable in short by the taste of the singer, dwelling on particular notes, to be made either gay or sad as the words require. Pray don't exclude yourself from Miss Whitfelds assistance in trying your music. I only hold you to your promise as to persons out of your family to which I trust faithfully—

I believe I must be out by Christmas although I shall be hard pressed. The bustle of elections &c &c run me hard for time so believe me sans phrase Yours faithfully

W. S.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO CLARKE WHITFELD

ABBOTSFORD BY MELROSE 17 Nov. [1812]

MY DEAR SIR,—I hasten to fulfill my promise of sending you a song from Rokeby as soon as visible. I beg to remind you of yours not to show the manuscript to any one, on which condition I hope soon to send you four or five more. But you must be sensible that the exercise of any unnecessary confidence in this matter might occasion both you & me being forestalled in our functions. The character of the song will speak for itself. I have only to add that in the story it is supposed to be the production of an amiable but rather softspirited youth who is pining away under the influence of a hopeless passion. I beg my Compliments to Miss Whitfeld who I hope will like the verses and am very much yours

W SCOTT

PS. The above is my present address. I shall be glad to hear that you have received this letter.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MANY thanks my dear Sharpe for your excellent ballad. I only regret the Camphor bag was omitted. In other respects it reminds me of a witty ballad on a similar subject in which a fair lady is assailed by a naked Spectre.

And in his hand withal
A thing which we for modesty
A pistol chose to call.

After glancing over the inclosed collection I dont find the speech of Johnstone tho that I have it I am certain. You may stay your antiquarian stomach with the inclosed that is the accompanying Volume. If I were not afraid to intrude too frequently on your devotions I would beg the pleasure of your company to my eve of rest next Sunday at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4—

W. S.

friday [1812]

The song in Beau Dillon is *impayable*¹

[*Hornel*]

¹ Sharpe had written to Scott in March 1812, sending him "a song on Dillon which Miss Mure sung at the Masquerade, but, alas! nobody heard it. It is a parody on Miss Owenson's Kate Kearny

Oh! did you ne'er hear of Beau Dillon
His beauty is fit for to kill one!
The tip of his nose
A budding moss rose,
O dreadful's the nose of Beau Dillon," etc.

With this same letter he encloses a ditty on the affair of Mrs. Lee. "The ballad of twenty-six stanzas is entitled 'Mrs. Lee's Garland,' showing how a poor lady was carried away against her own consent, to the tune of the 'Babes in the Wood,' or any other lamentable melody in fashion." At the spring assizes of 1804 at Oxford there occurred the trial of two Gordons

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

EDINR., 26th Nov. [1812]

I HAVE been seldom more mortified than at finding myself this October within 20 miles of you without having it in my power, as the Fates would have it, to turn aside for the purpose of brightening the chain. But I was just set forward on my little tour when the General Election burst upon us like a shot, and as our county was to be fiercely contested, I had only time to spend three days at Rokeby, where for some twenty reasons I would have liked to have stayed a week, and then I hurried over Stainmore as fast as possible to lend my most sweet voice to a losing contest.

I heard at Rokeby of your pilgrimage to the head of the Tees, which seems to have been as desperate a job as my old acquaintance Bruce's to the head of the Nile. I hope you liked Morritt as well as he liked you¹; he has great kindness and worth with good talent, and I fancy great scholarship; above all he has a sound, healthy, honest English understanding, which I begin to think worth all the talent and learning in the world.

Now let me thank you for the *Omniana*,² which I need not say highly amused me. Some trifles I can add: you were right in your original idea that Lord Herbert of Cherbury conceived himself to be odoriferous in person, although Henry More had the same whim. It was probably, I think, rather some perversion of the nose than any peculiar fragrance of the pores. I daresay with a certain degree of early training a man's organ of smelling

for carrying off the notorious Mrs. Leigh. Her own unblushing evidence "acquitted them of a forcible carrying off . . . De Quincey, then residing in Oxford, helped her to escape in disguise to a carriage." See Cox's *Recollections of Oxford*, 1804. Evidently this is the ballad for which Scott is thanking Sharpe.

¹ See Southey's letter to his wife, 23rd July 1812, for an account of this visit.

² *Omniana, or Horae Otiosiores*. [By Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.] 2 vols. London, 1812.

might distinguish flavours as well as a common cur if he did not reach the accuracy of the pointer. I knew an old lady who really could smell partridges in the stubble as well as you or I might smell them on the spit. It is a pity she did not take the field, for as she persevered in wearing a small hoop and long ruffles, she would have pointed with admirable effect. Of Baron Munchausen I can tell you something. Some years ago in London I was a little startled at hearing a foreigner ushered under this title into a musical party. As this naturally led to inquiries on my part, I was referred to the gentleman himself, who very good-humouredly told me he was the nephew of the celebrated Baron Munchausen, who was a minister under Frederick of Prussia. It seems the old Baron was a humourist, who after dinner, especially if he happened to have any guests who were likely to be taken in by his marvels, used to amuse himself by inventing or retailing such marvellous adventures as are contained in the volumes which bear his name. He added, his uncle was in other respects a sensible, veracious man, and that his adventures were only told by the way of quizzing or amusing society. A starving German literatus, whose name I have forgot, who knew the Baron and thought he had been neglected by him, compiled the book in revenge, partly from the stories of the Baron, partly from other sources, and partly from his mother wit. It proved a good hit for the bookseller, as the Baron's name and humour was well known, and by degrees made its way into other countries as a book of entertainment. The Baron Munchausen whom I knew was a grave serious sort of a person, a good deal embarrassed by a title which required eternal explanations, and only remarkable for the zeal with which he kept grinding musical glasses the whole evening. I had some other trifles to say, but as I am writing at our table in the Court, the noise of lawyers and wrangling drives them out of my head.—Ever yours,

[*Familiar Letters*]

WALTER SCOTT

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

MY DEAR MISS BAILLIE,—THIS will attend about one half of Rokeby. The latter part is incorrect being in the proofs before they were corrected but you will easily be able to allow for their imperfections. I would have sent this packet sooner but we only came to town a few days since and I have been very busy since with the peers' election and one vile thing or another. Besides I wanted to send you that part of the story where I was so unlucky as to run my head against your Ladyships which cost me the re-writing my robbers song.¹ When you have amused yourself with all this harum scarum stuff will you have the goodness to get a cover from our obliging friend Mr. Freling addressed to *J. B. S. Morritt Esq Rokeby Greta bridge Yorkshire* who is very curious to know what I have said of his beautiful domain a curiosity too laudable to remain ungratified. In fact it is really a charming place uniting in a remarkable degree the romantic character of Scottish scenery with the rich verdure and huge forest-trees that give majesty and richness to that of England. And I wish you knew Morritt and his wife whom I like excessively and have therefore the vanity to think that you would like them very much also. If I were to be in town in Spring of which I have no hope or expectation at present and which I should only desire for the purpose of seeing a friend or two of whom you stand among the foremost I would make you acquainted for one has a selfish pleasure from making your friends acquainted together as you always hear of them more frequently.

I have no leisure to add any thing to this scrawl except my kindest remembrances to Miss A Baillie the Dr. and family. I beg the sheets may remain in your own fireside

¹ The "Chough and Crow" in Joanna Baillie's play, *Orra*, one of the *Plays on the Passions*, vol. iii.

circle and never go out of your hand. I sufferd more by an indiscreet communication than one would think such a trifle could occasion. And believe me when I say with Captain Bobadill "by the heart of valour in me except it be to some peculiar and choice spirit to whom I am extraordinarily engaged as to yourself or so I could not extend thus far."¹ Though time presses I must not omit to thank you for the various civilities with which you have honord Terry who is most deeply sensible of them.—Once more adieu !

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 27 Novr. 1812

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO CLARKE WHITFIELD

EDINBURGH 28 Nov. [1812]

DEAR SIR,—I send you two other ditties both sung by the same young robber who sings Brignal banks.² You have decyphered the other manuscript very correctly. It was not Mrs. Scotts hand, but this is. I think Allen a Dale will make as good a subject for a glee as Lochinvar. Should you find difficulty in adapting the first stanza it may run thus

"*Allan a Dale has no faggot to burn, &c.*

I need not say that in sending you these scraps I by no means wish to fix on you the task of setting any you don't think well adapted for music, but only to give you room for choice.

¹ Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, Act I, sc. iii.

² O, Brignal banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen, etc.

Of Brignal banks I have said

“With desperate merriment he sang,
The Cavern to the Chorus rang,
Yet mingled with his reckless glee
Remorse’s bitter agency—

Yours in haste

W. SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO J. B. S. MORRITT

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I have been and am still working very hard in hopes to face the public by Christmas, and I think I have hitherto succeeded in throwing some interest into the piece. It is however a darker and more gloomy interest than I intended but involving oneself with bad company whether in fiction or in reality is the way not to get out of it easily so I have been obliged to bestow more pains and trouble upon Bertram and one or two blackguards whom he picks up in the slate quarries than what I originally intended. I am very desirous to have your opinion of the three first cantos for which purpose so soon as I can get them collected I will send the sheets under cover to Mr. Freling whose omnipotent frank will transmit it to Rokeby where I presume you have been long since comfortably settled. “So York shall overlook the town of York.” I trust you will read it with some partiality because if I have not been so successful as I could wish in describing your lovely and romantic glens it has partly arisen from my great anxiety to do it well, which is often attended with the very contrary effect. There are two or three songs and particularly one in praise of Brignal banks which I trust you will like because entre nous I like them myself—one of them is a little dashing banditti song call’d and entitled Allen a Dale. I think you will be able to judge for yourself in about a week—pray how shall I send you the *entire* goose which will be too heavy to

travel the same way with its *giblets*. The Carlisle coach is terribly inaccurate about parcels.

I fear I have made one blunder. In mentioning the brooks which flow into the Greta I have made the Balder distinct from that which comes down Thorsgill. I hope I am not mistaken. You will see the passage and if they are the same rivulet the leaf must be cancelled.

I trust this will find Mrs. Morritt pretty well and I am glad to find she has been better for her little tour. We were delighted with ours except in respect of its short duration and Sophia and Walter hold their heads very high among their untraveld companions from the predominance acquired by their visit to England. You are not perhaps aware of the *polish* which is supposed to be acquired by the most tra[n]sitory intercourse with your more refined side of the Tweed. There was an honest carter who once applied to me respecting a plan which he had formd of breeding his son a great booby of twenty to the church. As the best way of evading the scrape I askd him whether he thought his son's language was quite adapted for the use of a public speaker to which he answerd with great readiness that he could knap english¹ with any one having twice driven his fathers cart to Etal coal-hill.

I have calld my heroine Matilda. I dont much like Agnes though I cant tell why unless it is because it begins like Agag. Matilda is a [name] of unmanageable length but after all is better than none and my poor damsel was like to go without one in my indecision.

We are all hungering and thirsting for news from Russia.² If Boneys devil does not help him he is in a poor way. The Leith letters talk of the unanimity of

¹ i.e. "knap" or "knop," to speak after the English manner.

² At this date Napoleon crossed the Berezina. After the severe conflict, the bridges which had been thrown across the river were burned on 29th November about 9 a.m. "With the passage of the Berezina, the Grand Army of 1812 was extinct. Hunger, cold, . . . and the Cossacks, finished the work of destruction." See *Cambridge Modern Hist.*, vol. ix. 503.

the Russians as being most exemplary and that troops pour in from all the quarters of their immense empire. Their commissariat is well managed under the Prince Duke of Oldenburgh. This was their weak point in former wars.

Adieu. Mrs. Scott and the little people send love to Mrs. Morritt and you. Ever yours WALTER SCOTT

· EDINR. 29 *Novr.* [1812]

[*Law*]

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*November-December 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—Inclosed is a letter for our friends of the office which you will take care of. If I had not been to dine with Henry Drummond on a sort of marriage party I should have liked much to have dined with them. As it is John must give them a couple of guineas on my accot. to help out the feast.

I send you a sheet. I hope you will think I have made of Denzil what Moliere calls un petit pendement tres jolie.¹ W. S.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*December 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—I return the sheet & revise. I think a concluding verse to Bertrams speech would decidedly injure it—it is a thing I considered maturely—& I also demur to your criticism on the last couplet. Otherwise you will find all your suggestions attended to. W. S.

The conclusion is likely to be concluded by tomorrow at dinner time.²

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ Note at close of *Rokeby*.

² This and the next are two notes which end the correspondence as to *Rokeby*.

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*December 1812*]

DEAR JAMES,—I have restored Denzil & keep the other proof till tomorrow. I only altered Denzil in deference to your wish & like it better the old way.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

To THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH

CASTLE ST., *Dec. 1812*

I HAVE the honor to request of your Graces usual kindness the acceptance of a copy of *Rokeby*. To any other person some apology would be necessary for heaping quarto upon quarto but as your Grace was really the original cause of my writing any poetry beyond the limits of a ballad (since the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was only written to bring in Gilpin Horner)¹ I must insist upon my privilege of overwhelming you with the wild tales to which your encouragement has given occasion. I trust your Grace will always believe me your most respectful and obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

[*Buccleuch*]

To J. B. S. MORRITT

[*Postmarked 10th Decr. 1812*]

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I have just time to say that I have received your letters and am delighted that *Rokeby* pleases the owner. As I hope the whole will be printed off before Christmas it will scarce be worth while to send you the other sheets till it reaches you altogether—Your criticisms are the best proof of your kind attention to the poem. I need not say I will pay them every attention in the next edition. But some of the faults are so interwoven with the story that they must stand. Denzil for

¹ See vol. i. p. 242.

instance is essential to me though as you say not very interesting and I assure you that generally speaking the Poeta loquitur has a bad effect in narrative though not in reflection and when you have twenty things to tell it is better to be slatternly than tedious. The fact is that the tediousness of many real good poems arises from an attempt to support the same tone throughout which often occasions periphrasis and always stiffness. I am quite sensible however that the opposite custom I have often carried too far but I am apt to impute it partly to not being able to bring out my own ideas well and partly to haste not to error in the system. This would however lead to a long discussion more fit for the fireside than for a letter. I need not say that the poem being in fact your own you [are] at perfect liberty to dispose of the sheets as you please. I am glad my geography is pretty correct.

It is too late to enquire if Rokeby is insured for I have burnd it down in Canto V. But I suspect you will bear me no greater grudge than at the Noble Russian who burnd Moscow.¹ Glorious news today from the North—pereat iste ! Mrs. Scott Sophia and Walter join in best and kindest compliments to Mrs. Morritt and I am in great haste Ever dear Morritt faithfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. Thursday.

I heard of Lady Hood by a letter from herself—She is well and in high Spirits and sends me a pretty topaz seal with a talisman which secures this letter and signifies (it seems) which one would scarce have expected from its appearance my name.

[Law]

¹ Evidently Scott shared the popular misconception of the time that Moscow had been burned by the military governor of the city, Count Rostopchin, but "Moscow was burnt neither by Napoleon nor by Count Rostopchin. Probably, the fire was in part accidental, and due to plunderers, both Russian and French ; in part the deliberate work of patriotically-minded inhabitants."—*Cambridge Modern Hist.*, vol. ix. 496.

TO MISS SMITH

MY DEAR MISS SMITH,—My best apology for my silence is that I have been and still am very busy for he must needs go whom the Devil drives and this in the printers use of the epithet happens to be my case. I have seen no newspaper but the Courier which rarely is uncandid towards performers and always I think is very civil to you. My best congratulations attend you upon your success on the London boards: it is well merited and supported as I am sure it will be by the study necessary to your profession cannot but continue permanent. Sophia has commissioned me to forward a letter of acknowledgment for your very elegant token of remembrance, but as I am uncertain of getting a frank "it skills not much when it is delivered." So you must be content with my thanks in the mean[time] which are not merely for your kindness to poor Sophia but for the pleasure I have received from the book which is written in a beautiful stile and very affecting from its simplicity. I was truly sorry I missed Mr. Rush and that although he took some precautions to find me at home. But unluckily I had gone out coursing that day when I generally go out early and return very late so I had the mortification to miss a visit which I should have thought myself honoured in receiving.¹ As to Terry I suspect he had lingered too long in which is his only apology for not waiting on you in his return from Bath. He was expected there and given out in the bills at least a week before his arrival which is very like him for he is a great Daudle as the children say. He is an admirer of yours so I am sure would not voluntarily

¹ Evidently the "token of remembrance" was "a little work for Miss Scott, it was written by a dear friend of mine, and I think it will amuse my young friends," according to Miss Smith's letter of 3rd December. The Mr. Rush alluded to was probably the Solicitor-General of Ireland, whom she hopes Scott has seen "when he was in Edinburgh. He is a delightful man in every respect, of great talent and an idolator of your genius. I should like you to hear him read the 'Lay.'"—*Walpole Collection*.

omit an opportunity to be personally known to you. Pray do you know who the Mr. Smiths are who wrote the "Rejected Addresses" or is it an imaginary name.¹ I have seldom been so much diverted with any thing this long while. My new labours come on I fear with more haste than good speed but things must be as they may. I have almost none of the quarter to my disposal but I expect in a week or two to send you a portable copy—You must get Lady Alvanley to give you a billet on Rokeby next time you come north. You will delight in my friends I assure you. We are here very much elated with the good news from the North. Were I a free man I would not be long without going to see how this great struggle is to end. Our Leith people have close communication with Petersburg and their report of the enthusiasm of the Russian Patriotism is amazing. It would seem that the whole empire is in motion from the Wall of China to the Boristhenes and about to throw itself on the remnants of Bonaparte's army. There has been a curious proclamation by the Emperor in which he indirectly acknowledges his error in promoting french taste & french fashions & promises to be a better boy in future. So English is to be the rage of the Czars court. English gowns, stuffs, sugars and broadcloths and I hope English plays and poetry too. But I must not chat with

¹ *Rejected Addresses, or the New Theatrum Poetarum*. [By J. & H. Smith] 1812. 120. For this collection of famous parodies James Smith (1775-1839) wrote the best, though not the most numerous, contributions. Charles Mathews asserted that he "is the only man who can write clever nonsense." Though less genial than his brother, Horatio, he had a great reputation as a diner-out and wit. He succeeded his father as solicitor to the board of ordnance in 1812. His brother, Horatio, always known as Horace (1779-1849), was placed in a merchant's counting-house and then became a successful man of business. He published three novels and with his brother wrote several prefaces for plays in "Bell's British Theatre." *Rejected Addresses*, which went into eight editions in 1812, were "parodies of the most popular poets of the day in the guise of imaginary addresses from their pens." James parodied Cobbett, Crabbe, Southey, and Wordsworth, while Horace parodied Byron and Scott. Their only subsequent joint production was *Horace in London*, which appeared in 1813.

you any longer. Mrs. Scott sends kind remembrances
and I am ever Your affectionate friend

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 11 *Decr.* 1812

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOHN BELL, JUN. QUAYSIDE, NEWCASTLE

SIR,—I am much obliged to you indeed for the very curious parcel of broadsides, which I have received by the Coach. I wish I had any thing suitable to send you in return for your second volume, but my stock of Minstrel Ballads has been exhausted. As however there is a new edition of the Border ballads just published with some few additional illustrations respecting the battle of Otterbourne, and other ballads connected with the North of England, I have directed Messrs. Ballantyne and Co. to send a set with their first parcel to Newcastle, of which I beg your acceptance, in case there should be any in it, which you may think interesting or which may afford illustrations for your second volume.

The Mumming Dialogue is curious and though greatly debased retains the appearance of having been an ancient Mystery. Some rhymes of the kind were current in Scotland during my boyhood, but though the custom of *mumming*, or *guisarding* as we call it, is still in some degree kept up, I suspect the rhymes are forgotten.¹ I am, Sir, very much, your obliged servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINB., 22 *Dec.* [1812]

[*Willis's Current Notes*]

¹ Bell had written on 20th December: "I have a copy of nearly all of the original Ballads that were printed by him [White of Newcastle] and as you mention that sung by the *Mummers* at Xtnas I herewith send you it, together with one or two things more. . . . I am in search of more local

To JAMES BALLANTYNE

[Extract]

[31st December 1812]

WITH kindest wishes on the return of the season, I send you the last of the copy of *Rokeby*. If you are not engaged at home, and like to call in, we will drink good luck to it ; but do not derange a family party.

There is something odd and melancholy in concluding a poem with the year, and I could be almost silly and sentimental about it. I hope you think I have done my best. I assure you of my wishes the work may succeed ; and my exertions to get out in time were more inspired by your interest and John's, than my own. And so *vogue la galère*.

W. S.

[*Scott's Poetical Works*, 1833-4 edition]

matter towards a second volume or collection of the Bards of Northumberland."—*Walpole Collection*.

"I have a great number of volumes of stall ballads collected by an odd fish of a bookseller called Bell who lived in the Quayside at Newcastle and went parcel mad with studying Border antiquities, christening his children Algernon Percy Bell, Spearman Bell and so forth. He became bankrupt as you may suppose and I got this very extensive collection of ballads. I have also got a good many of my own collecting, and I will send them all to Abbotsford for your use when I go there at Xmas, if I can by so doing pleasure or amuse you."—Scott to Sharpe in C. K. Sharpe, *A Ballad Book*, edited with Notes by David Laing. William Blackwood & Sons, 1880.

TO THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE¹

[c. January 1813].

MY DEAR SIR,—I was favoured with your kind letter some time ago. Of all people in the world, I am least entitled to demand regularity of correspondence ; for being, one way and another, doomed to a great deal more writing than suits my indolence, I am sometimes tempted to envy the reverend hermit of Prague, confessor to the niece of Queen Gorboduc, who never saw either pen or ink.² Mr. Brunton³ is a very respectable clergyman of Edinburgh, and I believe the work in which he has solicited your assistance is one adopted by the General Assembly, or Convocation of the Kirk. I have no notion that he has any individual interest in it ; he is a well-educated and liberal-minded man, and generally esteemed. I have no particular acquaintance with him myself, though we speak together. He is at this very moment sitting on the outside of the bar of our Supreme Court, within which I am fagging as a Clerk ; but as he is hearing the opinion of the Judges upon an action for augmentation of stipend to him and to his brethren, it would not, I conceive, be a very favourable time to canvass a literary topic. But you are quite safe with him ; and having so much command of scriptural language, which appears to me essential to the devotional poetry of Christians, I am sure you can assist his purpose much more than any man alive.

¹ Crabbe's letter of 21st Dec. 1812, enquiring about Brunton, is in the *Walpole Collection*.

² *Twelfth Night*, IV. 2. 12.

³ Alexander Brunton (1772-1854), an Edinburgh minister who became Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh. His works are : *Sermons and Lectures* (1818) and *Persian Grammar* (1822).

I think those hymns which do not immediately recall the warm and exalted language of the Bible are apt to be, however elegant, rather cold and flat for the purposes of devotion. You will readily believe that I do not approve of the vague and indiscriminate Scripture language which the fanatics of old, and the modern Methodists have adopted, but merely that solemnity and peculiarity of diction, which at once puts the reader and hearer upon his guard as to the purpose of the poetry. To my Gothic ear, indeed, the *Stabat Mater*, the *Dies Iræ*, and some of the other hymns of the Catholic Church, are more solemn and affecting than the fine classical poetry of Buchanan; the one has the gloomy dignity of a Gothic church, and reminds us instantly of the worship to which it is dedicated; the other is more like a Pagan temple, recalling to our memory the classical and fabulous deities. This is, probably, all referable to the association of ideas—that is, if the “association of ideas” continues to be the universal pick-lock of all metaphysical difficulties, as it was when I studied moral philosophy—or to any other more fashionable universal solvent which may have succeeded to it in reputation. Adieu, my dear sir,—I hope you and your family will long enjoy all happiness and prosperity. Never be discouraged from the constant use of your charming talent. The opinions of reviewers are really too contradictory to found anything upon them, whether they are favourable or otherwise; for it is usually their principal object to display the abilities of the writers of the critical lucubrations themselves. Your “*Tales*”¹ are universally admired here. I go but little out, but the few judges whose opinions I have been accustomed to look up to, are unanimous. Ever yours, most truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

[*Lockhart*]

¹ “*Tales*. By the Rev. George Crabbe, LL.B.,” published by Hatchard, Piccadilly, in the summer of 1812.

TO LADY LOUISA STUART

EDINBURGH 3. *Janry.* 1813

DEAR LADY LOUISA,—Receive a copy of *Rokeby*. I trust you will think I have brought out your old acquaintance Bertram pretty well & brought him to a dashing conclusion—for the rest I cannot say very much : but as Corporal Nym wisely observes, “ *Things must be as they may,*” which scrap of the Corporals philosophy has done me good on more occasions than one. Tomorrow I go to Abbotsford to see my trees : none of the little dears are much higher than your Ladyships fan not to say Parapluie : but what of that—it is a poor thing but mine own, as Touchstone says to Audrey.— Is there any hope of seeing your Ladyship at Dalkeith or Edinburgh soon—I will flatter myself there is, as I have much to say that I cannot write. They talk here a good deal of a new poem in profess’d imitation of no less a person than your Ladyships humble servant called the *Vision of Triermain* & many people wish to make me very jealous of it.¹ I heard from second hand Mr. Jeffery pronounces it superior to me in my own line so I must be under the mortal apprehension of being out heroded. It is said it will be out immediately. If you are curious I will tell the publisher to send you a copy. Remember me most

¹ *The Bridal of Triermain*, of which Scott had published anonymously fragments in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* in 1811. They were attributed to Erskine. Scott completed the poem while at work on *Rokeby* and published a month after that poem, in 1813. “Except Mr. Morritt, Scott had, so far as I am aware, no English confidant upon this occasion.”—LOCKHART. It was reviewed in the *Quarterly*, July 1813, as an imitation of Scott’s style, “a serious imitation of the most popular living poet”; “the united beauty of Mr. Scott’s vigour of language and the march and richness of the late Thomas Warton’s versification.” “If it be inferior in vigour to some of his productions, it equals or surpasses them in elegance and beauty.”

In her reply, Bothwell Castle, 22nd April, Lady Louisa, after some commendation of *Rokeby*, goes on, “Of the bridal of Triermain I have heard good and bad. Lady Douglas read it aloud to Lady H. Ancram the young Ladies and me, the Scotts were gone. It produced exclamations

kindly & respectfully to Lady Douglas & family &
believe me ever Your Ladyships most truly obliged

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

WALTER SCOTT

TO JAMES SKENE

EDINBURGH, 6th January 1813

MY DEAR SKENE,—Although we are both bad correspondents, yet as there are few things would give me more pain than to think you had actually forgotten me, I take the liberty to jog your elbow with an immense quarto¹ which Longman and Company, Booksellers, Paternoster Row, London, will receive with all the speed of a Berwick smack. Be so good as to desire any of your correspondents in London to inquire for it, and send it down to Southampton. I trust it will give you some amusement. There is a bandit in the poem, a man who may match the Fra Diavolo of your Italian friends.

I am delighted to hear that Mrs. Skene's state of health leaves you at full liberty to enjoy the beautiful and picturesque country of which you are a temporary inhabitant. I have seldom been in any which interested me so much. The depth and variety of woodland scenery in the Forest puts our Scottish woods to shame, but they want our beautiful dales and glens and rivulets, for which their marshy brooks are a most wretched substitute.

of surprise and was all approved except one part the ridicule on Lucy's lovers. You are the only author I ever yet knew to whom one might speak plain about the faults found with his works—if *this were yours* I could fairly own the disapprobation of that part was very decided. I ventured to say the poem seemed meant as an imitation of your style and you sometimes had careless lines. 'No,' replied Lord D. indignantly, 'but Walter Scott *never* wrote anything in such bad taste as this, it is quite *unlike him &c.*'" Lord Newbattle reports "a Mr Gillies was the author"; and she reports other criticisms. In a letter of 6th May Morritt expresses the same dislike of "the Satiric part of the dialogue immediately succeeding Lyulph's tale. Mrs Morritt as well as myself felt this and amongst the other readers of the tale here I found the opinion universal that this passage is unworthy of the rest." These are the stanzas which seem to recall Scott's wooing at Gilsland in 1797.

¹ i.e. *Rokeby*.

I wish you much to make a little sketch for me of the ruinous fort and landing-place at Netley Abbey, with which I was particularly struck, more so indeed than with the ruins themselves, though so very finely situated and accompanied. But the character of the sand fort and landing-place had to me something very original.

If William Rose comes to your neighbourhood you must get acquainted with him. I will swear for your liking each other, and will send you a line of introduction, though I judge it unnecessary, as this letter might serve the purpose. He was my guide through the New Forest, where I spent some very happy days.¹ Return, my dear Skene, my kind compliments to Mrs. S., and believe me ever yours,

WALTER SCOTT

All good things of the new season attend you and yours.

[*Skene's Memories*]

TO ELIZABETH, MARCHIONESS OF STAFFORD

DEAR LADY STAFFORD,—I have taken my (far too frequent) freedom to address to you a parcel containing a quarto² poem. How it will come to Cleveland Place, or when, I am rather uncertain, for I was too much tired of the progress of the work to wait the dénouement, so escaped from the printers when the last proof-sheet was, to use a technical phrase, *out of hand*, and came to visit your ladyships acorns, which are one day to be my oaks. They are already making a very flattering display, as I hoped to have had the pleasure of telling your ladyship

¹ Scott had visited William Stewart Rose at his cottage of Gundimore in Hampshire in the spring of 1807, at that time correcting proofs of *Marmion*. They went to the New Forest, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, and Netley Abbey. Rose is best known as the translator of the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto—the best there is, the only one which preserves much of the spirit of the original.

² The quarto poem is *Rokeby*. See postscript of letter to Lady Abercorn, 8th January 1813.

in your passage through Edinburgh, but the cross fates prevented my having that satisfaction. I hope next time you honor our northern capital I shall be more fortunate in waiting upon your ladyship, for I have no prospect of being in London for many years.

Everything is as dull as possible in Edinburgh, men, women, children, all excepting Sharpe, who is himself, and extremely comical of course. He was mentioning to me the other day his expedition to the Bow, with Lady Stafford, in quest of Major Weir's house. I have a notion I could have found it if I had been of the party. I remember it a sort of receptacle for half dressed flax, but no person was then bold enough to visit it after sunset.

I had a letter from Lady Hood, with a very flattering token of her remembrance, nothing less than an oriental topaz cut for a seal, with a piece of Persian talismanic engraving, which I should have as soon construed to mean the Degial¹ as the name I am about to subscribe to this letter, unless our friend had warranted that the last was the correct reading.

Mrs. Scott desires to be most respectfully remembered, and I trust your ladyship will always believe me,—Your much obliged, most respectful, humble servant,

ABBOTSFORD, 6 January [1813].

WALTER SCOTT

[*The Sutherland Book*]

TO LORD CLARENDON²

MY LORD,—I trust to your Lordships experienced kindness for a favourable reception of my civil war tale.

¹ Deggial, antichrist. According to Mohammedan writers he has only one eye and one eyebrow, and on his forehead is written Cafer ("infidel"). "Chilled with terror, we concluded that the Deggial, with his exterminating angels, had sent forth their plagues on the earth."—BECKFORD, *Vathek*.

² Thomas Villiers (1753-1824), second Earl of Clarendon, uncle of George William Frederick Villiers, fourth Earl of Clarendon, the great Victorian statesman.

I have begged that Lord Glenbervie¹ with whom your Lordship is probably acquainted will have the goodness to forward the parcel containing it to the Grove.

I have the pleasure to acquaint your Lordship that the acorns are making a very fine appearance—Those especially which I reserved till spring for last spring-season being uncommonly favourable I do not think that one out of twenty failed—The mice made some havock among those planted in autumn. My little creation begins to assume an interesting appearance at least to those who witnessed its original condition, and will owe not a little to your Lordships kindness. I am now busy making war upon the hares who despite of gun & grey-hounds do my little plantation more damage than I could wish.

To return to my tale it has no political nor indeed general or national object and is only connected with the civil wars as an era when the disturbances of the times gave a probability to extra ordinary adventures of a domestic nature. I have attempted to sketch the character of a buccaneer of a higher order in which I have succeeded rather more to my own satisfaction than I have been usually able to do. In other respects the poem requires that kind allowance which I am sure it will meet no where more readily than from Lord Clarendon. I have the honor to be My Lord Your Lordships most faithful & obliged humble servant WALTER SCOTT

EDINB. 7 *January* 1813

[*Captain Pleadwell*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

ABBOTSFORD, 8th *January* 1813

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is so long a time since I have purposed writing to you that I am almost ashamed to

¹ Sylvester Douglas, Baron Glenbervie (1743-1823), a scientific and classical scholar.

begin my letter. But I have been a great vagabond during the autumn and since then have been hard at work at my new poem which (with official duty since November) has made me a very complete slave. The earliest sheets which can be got together are to be sent to Mr. Arbuthnot through whose cover I think you will receive them more speedily and safely than by the stage or Mail coach. I intended to have sent you my goose in giblets or in other words my poem by detached cantos but I liked it so little in detail I was unwilling the Marquis should see it untill it was finished always in hopes I should be able to mend it as I got on. Accordingly I think I have finished my bandit Bertram with some spirit and that the last canto comes off better than I had anticipated. I saw Lord Aberdeen for literally a moment in the midst of the bustle of the Peers' election¹ at which I was acting officially as returning officer and consequently had just time to say how do you [*sic*]²—I wished he would have staid a day to look at the painting of Duddingston,³ etc., but I could not prevail with him. He left Edinburgh that same evening.

You ask me dear Lady Abercorn how I like Lord Byron's poem,³ and I answer, very much—there is more original strength and force of thinking in it as well as command of language and versification than in almost any modern poem of the same length that I have happened to meet with. It is really a powerful poem, the more powerful because it arrests the attention without the aid of narrative and without the least apparent wish to conciliate the favour of the reader but rather an affectation of the contrary. I say an *affectation* of the contrary because I should be sorry to think that a young man of Lord Byron's powers should really and unaffectedly

¹ The election at Holyrood of the sixteen peers to represent Scotland in the House of Lords, as provided for at the Union in 1707.

² By the Rev. John Thomson, the artist, and minister of Duddingston.

³ *Childe Harold*, I and II.

entertain and encourage a contempt for all sublunary comforts and enjoyments. That we can be completely happy in this state of things that is to say that we can be so placed as neither to feel a void in our hearts or in our imaginations is altogether inconsistent with our nature and to mourn therefor is as wise as to regret that we have not wings or that we lack the lamp of Aladdin neither of which by the way would make us a bit happier if we had them. But any one who enjoys peace and competence and what I hold equal to either at least to the latter the advantage of a well-informed mind need only look round him to find out by comparison abundant reasons for being thankful for the rank in which providence has placed him and the wisest as well as happiest man is he who makes himself as easy in it as he can. This tinge of discontent or perhaps one may almost say misanthropy is the only objection I have to Lord B.'s very powerful and original work.

I had a temporary correspondence with L. B. on rather an odd occasion. The Prince Regent, who now makes *patte de velours* to the *gens des lettres* desired at some party to be introduced to Ld. B. (who by the way had written a very severe epigram on the *fracas* with Ld. Lauderdale) and said many polite things to him and what your Ladyship would hardly guess a great many of your friend. Ld B knowing the value of a prince's good word put all these sugar-plums in possession of a person to be sent to me and I could do no less than thank the Donor and so I had a civil letter from Childe Harold upon the subject. By the way there is a report Childe Harold is to be married to an heiress of our northern clime Miss Keith Mercer daughter of the Adml. Lord Keith¹ who is a considerable heiress independent of her father & an immense one with his consent.

¹ Margaret Mercer Elphinstone, daughter of George Keith Elphinstone, tenth Lord Elphinstone, and for his naval services created Baron Keith of Stonehaven, Marischal, and of Jane, d. of Colonel William Mercer of Aldie.

I communicated your Ladyship's message to the D. of Buccleuch but I have seen very little of him this year for Bowhill their seat in our neighbourhood is to be repaired and enlarged so they were not there this autumn and I have been only twice at Dalkeith being kept very hard at work. I expect to see him on Tuesday when *Rokeby* is to be christened on which occasion the printer always gives a little party to a few of my friends at which the Duke always attends. The Duchess's family are well at present.

I heard of Lord Hamilton a great deal from the Kembles they tell me he is very happy in a lady & I hope her attention will do much to confirm his health—I am glad to hear Lord Downshire is happily married.¹ His father was our good & affectionate friend but I never had an opportunity of seeing any of the rest of the family.

I have just escaped to this place for a few days to look at and direct my little creation. I think it will be prettier than I ventured to hope but it will take some years. There is a superb spring which I have covered with a little Gothic screen composed of stones which were taken down when the modern church was removed from Melrose Abbey. As I got an ingenious fellow to put my little fragments of columns and carving together you would really think it was 400 years old. It is covered with earth all around above and behind and my morning's occupation has been planting weeping willows and weeping birches about and above it.

Pray let me know whether there is any hope of your being soon in Scotland since I certainly must contrive to

In 1814 he became a viscount. In her reply Lady A. writes: "I cannot wish Miss Elphinstone Mercer so ill as to wish her married to Lord Byron for I hear everything bad of him except his Talent for writing &c." In 1817 she married, at Edinburgh, Count de Flahault de la Billardrie, a reputed son of Talleyrand by Madame de Souza. She was in her own right Baroness Keith and Baroness Nairne.

¹ Arthur Blundell Sandys Trumbull, third Marquess of Downshire, born 8th October 1788, married, 25th October 1811, Maria, eldest daughter of Other, fifth Earl of Plymouth.

meet you on the route as I fear you or rather the Marquis will hardly be tempted to visit Duddingston.¹ I should like much to know how he is and shall be proud if he finds anything to like in *Rokeby* though I am sure he will scold me for many blunders and negligences and very justly. Mrs. Scott joins in offering the kindest compliments of the season & I am ever my dear Lady Marchioness, Your honoured and obliged and grateful

WALTER SCOTT

Rokeby was begun & finished as it now stands between the first of October & 31 Dec. Think what a push & excuse my silence. I destroyed some part that was written before.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I am sure you will place it to anything rather than want of kindness that I have been so long silent—so very long, indeed, that I am not quite sure whether the fault is on my side or yours—but, be it what it may, it can never, I am sure, be laid to forgetfulness in either. This comes to train you on to the merciful reception of a Tale of the Civil Wars; not political, however, but merely a pseudo-romance of pseudo-chivalry. I have converted a lusty buccanier into a hero with some effect; but the worst of all my undertakings is, that my rogue, always in despite of me, turns out my hero. I know not how this should be. I am myself, as Hamlet says, “indifferent honest”; and my father, though an attorney (as you will call him), was one of the most honest men, as well as gentleman-like, that ever breathed. I am sure I can bear witness to that—for if he had at all *smacked*, or *grown to*, like the son of Lancelot Gobbo, he might have left us all as rich as Croesus, besides having

¹ Lord Abercorn's mansion near Edinburgh.

the pleasure of taking a fine primrose path himself, instead of squeezing himself through a tight gate and up a steep ascent, and leaving us the decent competence of an honest man's children. As to our more ancient pedigree, I should be loath to vouch for them. My grandfather was a horse-jockey and cattle-dealer, and made a fortune ; my great-grandfather a Jacobite and traitor (as the times called him), and lost one ; and after him intervened one or two half-starved lairds, who rode a lean horse, and were followed by leaner greyhounds ; gathered with difficulty a hundred pounds from a hundred tenants ; fought duels ; cocked their hats,—and called themselves gentlemen. Then we come to the old Border times, cattle-driving, halts, and so forth, for which, in the matter of honesty, very little I suppose can be said—at least in modern acceptation of the word. Upon the whole, I am inclined to think it is owing to the earlier part of this inauspicious generation that I uniformly find myself in the same scrape in my fables, and that, in spite of the most obstinate determination to the contrary, the greatest rogue in my canvass always stands out as the most conspicuous and prominent figure. All this will be a riddle to you, unless you have received a certain packet, which the Ballantynes were to have sent under Freeling's or Croker's cover, so soon as they could get a copy done up.

And now let me gratulate you upon the renovated vigour of your fine old friends the Russians. By the Lord, sir ! it is most famous this campaign of theirs. I was not one of the very sanguine persons who anticipated the actual capture of Buonaparte—a hope which rather proceeded from the ignorance of those who cannot conceive that military movements, upon a large scale, admit of such a force being accumulated upon any particular point as may, by abandonment of other considerations, always ensure the escape of an individual. But I had no hope, in my time, of seeing the dry bones of the Continent so warm with life again, as this revivification

of the Russians proves them to be. I look anxiously for the effect of these great events on Prussia, and even upon Saxony ; for I think Boney will hardly trust himself again in Germany,¹ now that he has been plainly shown, both in Spain and Russia, that protracted stubborn unaccommodating resistance will foil those grand exertions in the long-run. All laud be to Lord Wellington, who first taught that great lesson.

Charlotte is with me just now at this little scrub habitation, where we weary ourselves all day in looking at our projected improvements, and then slumber over the fire, I pretending to read, and she to work trout-nets, or cabbage-nets, or some such article. What is Canning about ? Is there any chance of our getting him in ? Surely Ministers cannot hope to do without him. Believe me, Dear Ellis, ever truly yours,

W. SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, 9th January 1813.

[Lockhart]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

[ABBOTSFORD, January 10, 1813]

YOUR kind encouragement my dear friend has given me spirits to complete the lumbering 4to which I hope has reachd you by this time I have gone on with my story *forthright*, without troubling myself excessively about the developement of the plot and other critical matters

But shall we go mourn for that my dear
The pale moon shines by night
And when we wander here and there
We then do go most right.

I hope you will like Bertram to the end—he is a Caravaggio sketch which I may acknowledge to you—but

¹ At this period, indeed, Napoleon was preparing for the reconquest of Prussia.

tell it not in Gath—I rather pique myself upon. And he is within the keeping of nature though critics will say the contrary. It would be difficult to say why any one should take a sort of pleasure in bringing out such a character but I suppose it is partly owing to bad reading i e [*sic*] ill-directed reading when I was young.

No sooner had I corrected the last sheet of *Rokeby* than I escaped to this Patmos as blithe as bird on tree and have been ever since most decidedly idle that is to say with busy idleness. I have been planting and screening and dyking against the river and planting willows and aspens and weeping birchs [*sic*] round my new old well which I think I told you I had constructed this summer. I have now laid the foundation for a famous background of copse with pendant trees in front and I have only to beg a few years to see how my colours will come out of the canvas. Alas ! who can promise that ! But somebody will see my trees and enjoy them whether I do or no. My old friend and pastor Principal Robertson (the historian) when he was not expected to survive many weeks still watchd the setting of the blossom upon some fruit-trees in the garden with as much interest as if it was possible he could have seen the fruit come to maturity and moralized on his own conduct by observing that we act upon the same inconsistent motive throughout life—it is well we do so for those that are to come after us. I could almost dislike the man who refuse[s] to plant walnut trees because they do not bear fruit till the second generation. And so many thanks to our ancestors and much joy to our successors and truce to my fine and very new strain of morality.

The night before we left Edinbr. I saw Twelfth Night acted very well indeed. Terry was the very Malvolio of Shakespeare and Mrs. Henry Siddons and her brother Murray from their good playing as well as their extreme likeness and also (which is always natural and pleasing) from the circumstance of their real relation to each other

were most interesting in the characters of Viola and Sebastian. I must not omit to say that the Family Legend was given out with acclamation for this week but of course we saw it not. A dreadful botch of a new play was attempted call'd Caledonia or the Rose and Thistle.¹ It was arrant nonsense and old nonsense into the bargain—a whole compound of petty larceny. Yet it was received tractably enough I fancy because it had no name nor pretension. But it died I hear a natural death after a night or two. . . .

The book was to go under Mr. Elders cover. We return to town tomorrow.

[*The concluding part and signature of this letter was cut off to give to a friend who was anxious to possess Sir W. Scott's autograph.*—Note in the hand of Joanna Baillie.]

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London, and Lockhart*]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT, ROKEBY, GRETA BRIDGE,
YORKSHIRE

[12 January—1813]

DEAR MORRITT,—Yours I have just received in mine office at the register house which will excuse this queer sheet of paper. The publication of Rokeby was delay'd till Monday to give the London publishers a fair start. My copies that is my friends were all to be got off about friday or Saturday and yours may have been a little later as it was to be what they call a pick'd one. I will call at Ballantynes as I return from this place and close the letter with such news as I can get about it *there*. The book has gone off here very bobbishly for the impression of 3000 and upwards is within two or three score of being

¹ *Caledonia, or The Thistle and the Rose*, "a three-act historical play, with Scots music, was played for the first time on any stage [at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh] on December 23 [1812]. . . . Whatever its merits may have been, it only ran for five nights."—J. C. DIBDIN, *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage* (1888), p. 267.

exhausted and the demand for these continuing faster than they can be boarded. I am heartily glad of this for now I have nothing to fear but a bankruptcy in the gazette of Parnassus but the loss of five or six thousand pounds to my good friends and school companions would have afflicted me very much. I wish we could whistle you here today. Ballantyne always gives a christening dinner at which the Duke of Buccleuch and a great many of my friends are formally feasted and he has always the best singing that can be heard in Edinburgh and we have usually a very pleasant party at which your health as patron and proprietor of Rokeby will be faithfully and honourably remembered.

Your horrid story¹ reminds me of one in Galloway where the perpetrator of a similar enormity on a poor idiot girl was discovered by means of the print of his foot [which] he left upon the clay floor of the cottage in the death-struggle. It pleased heaven (for nothing short of a miracle could have done it) to enlighten the understanding of an old ram-headed Sheriff who was usually nick-named Leather-head. The steps which he took to discover the murderer were most sagacious. As the poor girl was pregnant (for it was not a case of violation) it was pretty clear that her paramour had done the deed and equally so that he must be a native of the district. The Sheriff caused the Ministers advertize from the pulpit that the girl would be buried on a particular day and that all persons in the neighbourhood were invited to attend the funeral to shew their detestation of such an enormous crime as well as to evince their own innocence. This was sure to bring the murderer to the funeral—When the people were assembled in the Kirk the doors were locked by the Sheriff[s] order and the feet of all the men were examined. That of the murderer was detected by

¹ "The horrid story . . . was that of a young woman found murdered on New Year's Day in the highway between Greta Bridge and Barnard Castle—a crime the perpetrator of which was never discovered."—LOCKHART.

the measure of the foot-tread & a peculiarity in the mode in which the sole of one of them had been patchd. The remainder of the curious chain of evidence upon which he was convicted will suit best with twilight or a blinking candle being too long for a letter. The fellow bore a most excellent character and had committed this crime for no other reason that could be alleged than that having been led accidentally into an intrigue with this poor wretch his pride revolted at the ridicule which was like to attend the discovery.

On calling at Ballantynes I find as I had anticipated that your copy being of royal size requires some particular nicety in hot-pressing. It will be sent by the Carlisle Mail *quam primum*. Ever yours W SCOTT

Love to Mrs. Morritt. John Ballantyne says he has just about 80 copies left out [of] 2250 this being the Second day of publication and the book a two guinea cut.

[*Law*]

TO ELIZABETH, MARCHIONESS OF STAFFORD ¹

[*January 1813*]

I OUGHT long since to have made my respectful acknowledgments to Lady Stafford for the splendid Sutherland folio.² It contains for an old antiquary like me many points of great interest and curiosity. Sir Robert Gordon, no doubt, did not particularly study the picturesque, but

¹ In the letter of 13th January which Scott is answering Lady S. promises to send an engraving of a picture lately bought by Lord S. "representing the field of Chevy Chase the day after the Battle . . . the expression conveyed in it is really quite tragical." See note to letter to Terry, 25th February, p. 232.

² Henry Weber published this work under the auspices of the Marchioness of Stafford, afterwards Duchess of Sutherland, from the original manuscript in her possession. It is Sir Robert Gordon's (1580-1656) *A genealogical history of the Earldom of Sutherland, from its origin to the year 1630; . . . with a continuation to . . . 1651* [by Gilbert Gordon]. Published [by H. Weber]. A. Constable: Edinburgh, 1813, fol.

he often gives hints which may be useful to those who do. We gather so much of the manners of old times from these genuine sources that we should not complain of a little labour in getting at them, and we are greatly indebted to those who like your ladyship have had the kindness and liberality to render them publicly accessible. I think our friend Lady Hood will be particularly delighted with Sir Robert's labours, for there is a great deal of the Clan Cheinzie.

I shall be quite delighted to receive Chevy Chase. I have more connection with the picture than your ladyship is aware, for a gentleman, a Mr. Eagle, I think, or some such name, near Bristol, wrote to me when the artist was making his sketch for some information about costume, etc., on which I was very happy to afford him any lights that I possessd, warning him against putting our pleasant men of Tiviotdale into tartan, which would have been the natural idea of an English painter. I took the liberty also of hinting that some of the large deer-dogs might be introduced with effect, and I likewise mentioned some particulars respecting the arms of the Scottish and English. I am delighted to hear that the picture has been found worthy of a place in the marquis's collection, which is the best possible proof of its merit. I never saw either the artist or the person who applied to me on his behalf. But I took the liberty of pointing out a subject of Border history as a pendant to Chevy Chase. It was the battle of Reidswair,¹ which took place on occasion of a meeting between the Scottish and the English wardens to settle aggressions which had been committed on each side. They came with their attendants, the principal chieftains

¹ Redeswire is not far from Otterburn in Northumberland. Carter Bar is on the site of the Raid of Redeswire (July 1575), the last Border battle. "Twenty-five of the English were slain, one of them Sir George Heron, the head of an eminent Border house. The English warden himself, Sir Francis Russell, the Earl of Bedford, and several other Englishmen of note, were led away as prisoners. The regent detained them for some days in hospitable imprisonment in his Castle of Dalkeith."—J. HILL BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. 153.

and clans on each side attending also, and according to custom on these days of truce they mingled together in the most friendly manner, and began to dance, drink, play at cards, and buy and sell together. In the midst of this jollity a quarrell arose between the wardens, who began (a dangerous topick) *to reckon kin and blood*. At length, says the old song, speaking of Forster, the English warden,

“He rose and rax’d him where he stood,
And bade him match him to his marrows;
Then Tynedale heard them reason rude,
And they let fly a flight of arrows.
Then was there nought but bow and spear,
And every man drew out a brand,” etc.

Now my idea was that the two contending wardens would make the central figures, the Englishman in the picturesque attitude assignd him by the ballad maker drawing himself up to his full height, while he bade the other match himself with his equals, the men of Tynedale drawing their bows, and the immediate attendants of both parties standing to their arms and mounting their horses, while those more remote were represented, some as wondering at the alarm, and others, whom it had not yet reachd, intent upon their business and amusement. Female figures might be thrown in as collecting their children and hurrying from the tumult. The scene, the bare crest of a wild hill, with a long perspective over the desert mountains of Reedsdale and Tynedale. Mr. Eagle (if that be his name) wrote to me saying the young artist was highly delighted with the idea, and proposed to send me the sketch before attempting the picture. But I never heard more of it. I am no judge of painting at all, nor even of what can be painted, but I still think that this subject unites a varied and spirited interest. So if the marquis should wish to have a companion to Chevy Chase I am not unwilling that the idea should be considerd once more, though your ladyship is well entitled and very wellcome to laugh at me for my pains. Mrs.

Scott has the honor to offer her respectful remembrances; and I am ever, dear Lady Stafford, your ladyships truly honord and obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*The Sutherland Book*]

TO MRS. HUGHES

MY DEAR MRS. HUGHES,—I am extremely sorry to hear you have been so very unwell & that your indisposition should have interfered with your delightful musical talents is a general loss to all your friends. I assure you I feel the very idea of it severely though it may be a very long time if indeed I ever again have the pleasure of hearing them exercised. A number of little personal concerns which made an occasional journey to London necessary have been last year arranged and I do not foresee any circumstance (unless my brother in law return from India) which is likely to bring me far south of the Tweed. London for itself I do not like very much and the distance & bustle and discomfort of lodgings prevent me from seeing very much of the few friends whose society is its greatest charm. So that I fear it will be long before I can profit by your kind invitation. You will be interested to learn that the author of the note on Littlecote Hall¹ is Lord Webb Seymour brother of the D. of Somerset; it is certainly an admirable description of the old mansion.

Mr. Hawes² is at the most perfect liberty to print any part of Rokeby which he chuses to set to music. My publishers have had large offers from musical composers to make a monopoly of these things by granting the

¹ Littlecote Park, on the borders of Wilts, one of the finest sixteenth-century manor houses in England.

² William Hawes (1785-1846), singer and composer. "In 1818 he edited in score the great collection of English madrigals, called 'The Triumph of Oriana.' . . . In 1822 he tried to establish exclusive rights in one of twelve Scotch songs which he had edited and published; but the suit he brought against the proprietors of the 'Gazette of Fashion' with this object was dismissed by the Lord Chancellor."—*D.N.B.*

privilege of publication to one Composer only but I have always set my face against such proposals as an unhand-some thing from the professor of one fine art to those of another. Of Mr. Hawes qualifications I am no judge but I am sure your voice & taste will make his music appear to an advantage which neither the notes nor the words can have by themselves.

Mrs. Scott begs me to offer her best compliments : we should be truly happy could we flatter ourselves with a prospect of meeting by your taking a Northward trip. In the summer our country is pleasant & I need not say how happy we should be to see you. Believe me Dear Mrs. Hughes Your most respectful & much obliged humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 25 Jan. [1813]

[*Wells Wells*]

TO PATRICK MURRAY

MY DEAR MURRAY,—I have made all enquiries, & so has Clerk, to discover if there can be any chance of getting Adam out of his present misfortune. But circumstances seem altogether unfavorable. The only way in which officers have been able to get off has been by interest with our government to get permission for some officer of equal rank, prisoner here to go to France on parole either to send over the english officer or to return himself. But in so many cases these French officers have utterly broke faith that government have determined not to pursue this course in future, & I grieve to say there appears no other open at present. There is a chance that Boneys late scrape may make him more tractable on the subject of the exchange of prisoners, but then that very circumstance will make our government hesitate upon affording him facilities for supplying himself with veteran officers— In the meantime he is well poor fellow, and his good temper, & good spirits will make him

welcome to others & contented in his own mind even under this unpleasant situation. He is besides safe from the risks of war, & those of climate which are still more formidable. I trust however we shall soon hear from him. Major Howard Raes brother-in-law heard of him as he passed thro' Orleans well & in good spirits. This is a later account than yours even.

I have not had much communication with Gifford lately, when I have an opportunity I will not forget your commission, though I doubt if he will consider the Encyclopedia as a fair subject of review—

What a winter has this been for Europe, if God gives us grace to make a good use of the incalculable advantages we have now obtained, & will now dare to believe that that [*sic*] the martial enterprize & skill of Lord Wellington has not been the original cause of the successful & glorious stand of Russia. Sir James Riddell is going on an expedition to Russia, and has promised to get me a print or drawing of Platon, the celebrated Hetman of those grand fellows the Cossacks.¹ I expect every mail to hear of a grand Northern Confederacy against the French power, of which it is now said that both Denmark & Russia will be active members. If so these states will surely consider that their very existence will be at stake in the ensuing contest—General Don. Juan Downie (late Jock Downie of a Paisley compting house) is here just now : a fine martial figure, with one cheek bone knocked off by grape-shot. He is in prodigious spirits, having effected an exchange and being immediately to return to Spain, to have a command under the new system. He told me he had no doubt if Russia held out that Lord Wellington would drink the Kings health at Bourdeaux in

¹ Count Matvei Ivanovich Platoff (1757-1818). He "showed such capacity and courage that he was named by Alexander I. in 1801 Hetman of the Cossacks of the Don. As such he took part in the campaigns against the French, 1805-7, and, after the enemy had evacuated Moscow, hung upon their rear with pitiless pertinacity, wearing them out by incessant attacks, cutting off straggling parties, and capturing their convoys of provisions."—*Chambers's Encyclopædia*. See later, p. 271.

French claret this summer. Adieu my dear Murray. God bless you. I miss you much in these stirring times to go over the Tactique together. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Murray & believe me most truly yours

3 [23 ?] February 1813 EDINR.¹

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO DANIEL TERRY

MY DEAR TERRY,—Agreeably to what I wrote yesterday I inclose the Humours let blood in the head vaine² where I think you will find something curious in the way of dramatic illustration. John Ballantyne is engaged in cataloguing tant bien que mal the fine collection of prints left by Hunter.³ Some of them are exquisitely beautiful. There's one particularly of Prince Charles (the Chevalier) by Willis⁴ that I will have a peck at. Have you seen the fine picture of Chevy Chase by Bird.⁵ The artist obligingly

¹ This letter is dated the 3rd in the Abbotsford copies, but Murray's letter reporting the capture of Adam Fergusson and suggesting that an exchange might be arranged "by means of the Philosophers. The great emperor villain seems sometimes to be inclined to do for those people what he wont do for anyone else," is dated 16th February.

² Samuel Rowlands's *The Letting of Humours Blood in the Head-vaine; with a new Morisco daunced by Seaven Satyres upon the bottom of Diogenes Tubbe*. 16vo. Suppressed; reprinted and edited by Scott, 1814. Both editions in Abbotsford Library. "I see you do not mention what our friend Dr Grosart might call the 'mentionable' fact, that he [Rowlands] once had the honour of being edited and commented on by Sir Walter Scott, whose edition of the *Letting &c.* is in my possession."—Swinburne to Edmund Gosse, 16th December 1879 (Gosse and Wise's *Letters of Swinburne* (1918), ii. 53). This letter should follow that of 24th February 1815, vol. iv. pp. 34-6.

³ Alexander Gibson Hunter, formerly Constable's partner, who died in March 1812. The sale was advertised in the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, March 1815.

⁴ Probably Johann Georg Wille (1715-1808). "His style is peculiarly adapted to silks, satins, & all kinds of glossy drapery."—SLATER, *Engravings and their Value*, which lists Prince Charles Edward Stuart after Torqué.

⁵ Edward Bird (1772-1819) was a subject painter. His masterpiece was the "Field of Chevy Chase." "It was bought by the Marquis of Stafford for three hundred guineas; the original sketch for the same was sold to Sir Walter Scott . . . [the picture] moved Allan Cunningham to tears . . . [and it] procured for him [Bird] the appointment of court painter to Queen Charlotte."—*D.N.B.* See previous note, p. 226.

sent on his original sketch in consequence of some correspondence we had together about costume.

James Ballantyne is in full tide of labour twelve presses groaning. Yours ever

W. S.

EDIN. 25 *feby* [1815]

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—I am delighted to hear you are safe in Edinburgh after your unpleasant and perilous [journey?]. The seas of Mull must have been no joke during the last dreadful gales and I should not have been very happy if I had known Mrs. Clephane your sister and you were exposed to them. Mrs. Scott and I only propose remaining here till the 25th so I hope we shall be in town long before you think of leaving it. I am here busy as ever a Miss was in dressing her new doll and my little farm is fully as much in need of attire as the young lady's doll usually happens to be. But I have done what man may. I have planted a good many acres—I have built a well about 400 years old—I have inclosed—I have gardened and to sum the whole half ruind myself yet we still look like the regiment of Sir John Falstaff somewhat too bare and beggarly. But as the Spaniard says "Time and I against any two" and in truth a little experience in life has so far satisfied me that there is more pleasure in hope and expectation than in actually possessing what we wish for that I am contented to think how fully all my labours will show one day and therefore was never less tempted to envy the benediction which you quote as peculiar to him who expecteth nothing. One thing I expect most certainly and promise myself much pleasure therein and that is to find you all at home on the morning of the 26th so if you quit Dumbrecks pray send to Castle

Street where you are to be found. Mrs. Scott joins in kind compliments to Mrs. and Miss Clephane and I ever am my dear young friend Yours most faithfully and affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 12 *March* 1813.

[*Northampton*]

To RICHARD SAINTHILL JONES

SIR,—It is the least thing I can do in return to any Gentleman who thinks so advantageously of me as to recommend the history of Alfred to my consideration as a subject for poetry, to state very briefly the circumstances which will always induce me to choose themes of less importance. In the first place it has always seemed to me that the majesty of history is rather injured than improved by the ornaments of poetical fiction and that where historical characters are introduced it ought only to be incidentally and in such a manner as not to interfere with established truth. But besides the patriotism of Alfred as an enlightened legislator and great warrior is not of a nature suited to my limited powers of poetical description. A philosophical poet might make a great deal of the establishment of the wise Saxon code and the expulsion of the Danes but a romancer must have a canvas of a much more limited scale and varied and rapid incident. The only scene of Alfred's life fitted for such a poet is his over-toasting the cakes in the shepherd's house. Besides every one knows how a poem on Alfred's life must necessarily end—come at it how he will, there is only one point to which the poet can conduct his hearers and those who know how difficult it is to engage attention on any conditions will not willingly relinquish the powerful assistance afforded by the suspense of the reader. Lastly I have no clear idea either of the country in which Alfred warred or of the manners of the Saxons of his day, and

where the author himself does not conceive vividly and clearly he can communicate little information or pleasure to others.

These Sir are a few among many reasons which induce me to decline the task your civility and good opinion recommends to me. I am not the less indebted to you for supposing me capable of it and have the honor to be Your obliged Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 12 *March* 1813.

[*Owen D. Young*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

[EDINBURGH, *March* 13, 1813]

MY DEAREST FRIEND, The pinasters have arrived safe and I can hardly regret while I am so much flattered by the trouble you have had in collecting them. I have got some wild birch seed from Loch Katrine and both are to be planted next week when God willing I will be at Abbotsford to superintend the operation. I have got a little corner of ground laid out for a nursery where I shall rear them carefully till they are old enough to be set forth to push their fortune on the banks of Tweed. What I shall finally make of this villa-work I dont know, but in the meantime it is very entertaining.

I shall have to resist very flattering invitations this season for I have received hints from more quarters than one that my bow would be acceptable at Carleton house in case I should be in London, which is very flattering especially as there were some prejudices to be got over in that quarter. I should be in some danger of giving new offence for, although I utterly disapprove of the present rash and ill-advised course of the Princess yet as she always was most civil and kind to me I certainly could not as a gentleman decline obeying any commands she might give me to wait upon her especially in her

present adversity which might very naturally in the present unfortunate circumstances give offence elsewhere. So, though I do not affect to say I should be sorry to take an opportunity of peeping at the splendours of royalty prudence and œconomy will keep me quietly at home till another day.

My great amusement here this some time past has been going almost nightly to see John Kemble who certainly is a great artist. It is a pity he shews too much of his machinery. I wish he could be double caped as they say of watches. But the fault of too much study certainly does not belong to many of his tribe. He is I think very great in those parts especially where character is tinged by some acquired and systematic habits like those of the Stoic philosophy in Cato and Brutus or of misanthropy in that of Penruddock.¹ But sudden turns and natural bursts of passion are not his forte. I saw him play Sir Giles Overreach² (the Richd. III. of middling life) last night. But he came not within a hundred miles of Cooke³ whose terrible visage and short abrupt and savage utterance gave a reality almost to that extraordinary scene in which he boasts of his own successful villany to a nobleman of worth and honor of whose alliance he is so ambitious. Cooke contrived somehow to impress upon the audience the idea of such a monster of enormity as had learned to pique himself even upon his own atrocious character. But Kemble was too handsome too plausible and too smooth to admit its being probable that he should be

¹ A soured recluse in Cumberland's play, *The Wheel of Fortune* (1779).

"The character of Penruddock, in the *Wheel of Fortune*, well conceived in itself, and admirably supported by Kemble, and since by Charles Young, continues to command attention and applause."—SCOTT in his sketch of Richard Cumberland, *Lives of the Novelists*.

² An unscrupulous monster in Massinger's play, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1628).

³ George Frederick Cooke (1756-1811). It was said by a certain critic that "Cooke did not play many parts well, but that he played those which he did play well better than anybody else." He "commenced in London as a rival to Kemble, acted with him and Mrs. Siddons from the season 1803-4 to the end of his London performances."—*D.N.B.*

blind to the unfavourable impression which these extraordinary Vaunts are likely to make on the person whom he is so anxious to conciliate.

ABBOTSFORD 21 *March*

—THIS letter begun in Edinburgh is to take wing from Abbotsford. John Winnos (now John Winnos is the Sub-Oracle of Abbotsford the principal being Tom Purdie) John Winnos pronounces that the pinaster seed ought to be raised at first on a hot-bed and thence transplanted to the nursery so to a hot-bed they have been carefully consigned the upper oracle not objecting in respect his talent lies in catching a salmon or finding a hare sitting on which occasions being a very complete Scrub, he solemnly exchanges his working jacket for an old green one of mine and takes the air of one of Robin Hoods followers. His more serious employments are ploughing harrowing and overseeing all my premisses ; being a complete Jack of all trades from the Carpenter to the Shepherd nothing comes strange to him and being extremely honest and somewhat of a humourist he is quite my right hand. I cannot help singing his praises at this moment because I have so many odd and out of the way things to do that I believe the conscience of many of our jog-trot Country-men would revolt at being made my instrument in sacrificing good corn land to the visions of Mr. Prices theory.

Mr. Pinkerton the Historian has a play¹ coming out at Edinbr. It is by no means bad poetry yet I think it will not be popular. The people come and go and speak very notable things in good blank verse but there is no very

¹ “ The name of the play was *The Heiress of Strathern, or the Rash Marriage* ; and it was stated in the bills to be ‘ a tragedy written by a gentleman of Edinburgh, and never acted on any stage.’ Mr. Terry, afterwards of the London theatres, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Siddons, performed parts in it. . . . The epilogue was very obligingly written by Mr. R. P. Gillies, to whom Sir W. Scott had recommended Mr. Pinkerton to apply on the occasion. The prologue was from his own pen.” Writing to Pinkerton on 24th March 1813, the day after the production, Henry Siddons says

strong interest excited. The plot also is disagreeable and liable to the objections (though in a less degree) which have been urged against the Mysterious Mother. It is to be acted on Wednesday. I will let you know its fate. P. with whom I am in good habits shewed the Ms. but I referd him with such praise as I could conscientiously bestow to the players and the public. I dont know why one should take the task of damning a mans play out of the hands of the proper tribunal. Adieu my dear Friend I have scarce room for love to Miss Mrs. and Dr B.

W SCOTT

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London, and Lockhart*]

TO THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH

MADAM,—I never apologise for intruding upon your Grace when I can recommend to you an act of kindness or of charity, for I am always sure that the cause would advocate itself even if introduced by a stranger, and I think your Grace would scold me if I did not think that in such a case as the enclosed, I have as the only minstrel of the Clan, a sort of privilege to be a beggar. I believe there is now no remnant of the Household Poet except the Laureate and the Highland pipers. Of the rights of the former I know nothing, but if I may regulate myself on those of the Piper, who is always the most important as well as the most noisy attendant of the Chieftain, I will be quite warranted in begging a guinea from your Grace

“several poetical passages were most highly applauded; but, when the audience discovered the circumstance of the brother and sister, they grew outrageous, and would hardly suffer Mr. Terry to conclude the play. I stood on the stage several minutes to obtain a hearing for it a second night, which I could not effect. I still was in hopes of carrying the point; but, when the farce began, the storm renewed; and nothing would pacify the audience but the giving out another play.”—*Pinkerton's Correspondence*, ii. 404-6.

and another from the Duke to save a brother minstrel¹ from very short commons. I do not warrant that the poetry will be good, as the poor man has not been lately in a way to improve his talents, which were originally far from despicable. But what your Grace may miss in amusement you will, I am sure, account more than compensated in bounty to a poor man who I fear needs it much. If Lord Montagu has not forgot me he will give me a guinea also. I hope the Duke and Lord Whichester,² the gallant Lord John and all the young Ladies are well, especially my little god-daughter; I have got a little keepsake for her, but I will claim a dinner at Dalkeith or Bowhill on her birthday before I produce it. It is a very ancient and simple brooch, which I think may have one day fixed the mantle of a British princess.—Your Grace will always believe me your most respectful and very faithful humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 22d March [1813]

[*Buccleuch and Familiar Letters*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

ABBOTSFORD, 23d March 1813

You have a great right my dear friend to upbraid my ungracious silence and yet heaven knows the five fingers of my right hand have had so much to do for six months past that I believe they have sometimes wished for the cramp as a relief from the pen. If you will recollect my dear Lady Abercorn that *Rokeby* was written as fast as my hand could write it, that moreover I have *Swift* to bring out before the Birthday, that our official duty though formal and easily discharged is still duty which occupies two or three hours each day during the terms of

¹ James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. He was preparing to publish the *Queen's Wake*. On the 9th April he acknowledges the money thus procured. "I wonder how the world take it on to call you a selfish man for if you had all the faults in the world you are the most distant from that."

² Afterwards Walter Francis, fifth Duke of Buccleuch.

the court—that I had the burden of constant attention to the police of the little county of which I am Sheriff where certain agitators of Luddism had begun to be busy—above all that I had Abbotsford to convert from a bare bank and meadow into a human place of habitation I think you will pardon my eyes for turning very heavy when the various labours of the day were over and when I was most disposed to send remembrances to a friend whom I have so many reasons to esteem and to love. I have been here for some days directing the important operations of the spring and particularly the stocking of a garden which I trust will be a tolerable one for ordinary wall fruit if the easterly hazes which infest the Tweed in the season of flourish will permit. Forest trees flourish with me at a great rate and of my whole possession of 120 acres I have reduced about 70 to woodland both upon principles of taste and œconomy. I have been studying Price¹ with all my eyes and [am] not without hopes of converting an old gravel-pit into a bower and an exhausted quarry into a bathing-house. So you see my dear Madam how deeply I am bit with the madness of the picturesque and if your Ladyship hears that I have caught a rheumatic fever in the gravel-pit or have been drowned in the quarry I trust you will give me credit for dying a martyr to taste.

I trust to find the Kembles still in Edinr. J. K. is I think greater than himself and that is twenty times

¹ Sir Uvedale Price (1747-1829). He was a great friend of Charles James Fox, and with him travelled to Rome, Venice, Turin and Geneva, and in August 1768 "paid a visit to Voltaire at Ferney." He lived mostly at his country seat Foxley, Herefordshire, where Wordsworth visited him in 1810 and 1827. His principal work was: *An Essay on the Picturesque as compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful: and on the use of studying pictures for the purpose of improving real landscape.* 2 vols. London, Hereford, 1794-98. "Scott, when engaged in forming his gardens at Abbotsford, studied the works of Price, and wrote of him in the 'Quarterly Review' that he 'had converted the age to his views.'" "The best edition of the *Picturesque* was published at Edinburgh in 1842, with much original matter by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder."—*D.N.B.* It may be recalled that William Combe (1741-1823), the perpetrator of several literary frauds, satirised Price's essay in the first of his *Tours of Dr. Syntax* (1812-21).

greater than any actor I ever saw. I attended him most faithfully untill we left Edinburgh and to my very great amusement indeed. He is a very magnificent study for any one who is fond of dramatic representation. I will take care of your Ladyship's commission, and will add to any new books the Kembles may be able to find two or three little volumes. The first and most interesting is a spirited imitation of *my manner* called the *Bridal of Triermain* the author is unknown but it makes some noise among us. The other is a little novel rather too much of the marvellous cast for my taste but written with some spirit and interest. Perhaps I may find something else before my packet goes off especially an 8vo *Rokeby* which must be ready by the time I get to town. I am quite proud of the Marquis's approbation—you know how very highly I hold his Lordship's taste.

I was very well diverted indeed with the *Rejected Addresses* but I really did not think it necessary to express my satisfaction to the Messrs. Smiths, the authors. I would certainly have done so had I had a handsome opportunity but the gentlemen are perfect strangers to me and to intrude a compliment upon them might have looked like deprecating their satire a point on which my feelings are perfectly invulnerable.

The poor Princess of Wales—surely her fate has been a hard one and no less so to have fallen into the hands of her present advisers whose only object in making these scandalous anecdotes public is to disgrace the royal family in the eyes of the public. After all the whole affair reminds me irresistibly of a hand at Commerce. The present ministers while out of office held the Princess in their hand,—a court card to be sure but of no great value—they have the luck to take up the Prince (cast by the blunder of their opponents) and they discard the Princess as a matter of course : while the *Outs* equally as a matter of course take her up and place her in their hand as being a kind of *pis aller*. And thus goes the strange game at politics.

I have had it intimated to me through the Prince's Librarian that his R.H. desires his library to be open to me when I come to town and wishes me to be present, with many other words of great praise and civility. I should soon lose my sunshine I fancy were I to go to Kensington (which I certainly would do if I were asked) having no idea that the Princess's adversity cancels my obligations to her for so much attention as I have received. And so four hundred miles' distance has its advantages.

Miller¹ has given up business and my present publishers are my old friends and school-fellows the Ballantynes of Edinburgh. To publish for myself might be more lucrative but from the connections I have with them I really get as much by *Rokeby* as I ought in reason to expect and more than was ever given for any poem of the length, —3000 guineas. Yet the first edition has paid them and the second will be clear profit to the publishers. I will write a few lines by the Kembles whom I hope to see before their departure.

I beg my most respectful Compliments to the Marquis & the Ladies & am ever Dear Lady Abercorn Your Ladyships most faithful & truly obliged humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 23 *March* [1813]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO JOHN BELL, JUNR., QUAYSIDE, NEWCASTLE

DEAR SIR,—I have been some time absent from Edinburgh, owing to which and to my wishing to add a copy of *Rokeby*, in which you may possibly take some interest, as the scene lies in the North of England, I could

¹ "Why did you not deal with Miller as you did formerly—What did you get for *Rokeby*? I hear that three days after it was published there were 2500 copies sold. You would make much more were you to publish yourself."—Lady ABERCORN, 7th March.

not till now accomplish my promise of sending you the *Border Minstrelsy*. The new edition of *Rokeby* is I find not to be published for a fortnight so I will not any longer delay my packet on that account.

The institution for a Northumbrian Society of Antiquaries is most laudable, and the County affords much subject for curious research. As I could not upon any occasion propose myself the pleasure of attending their meetings, and am already a Member of two Societies of that kind in Scotland, it would be useless in me to add my name to the highly respectable list of Ordinary Members; but I will at all times and in any way be most happy should it be in my power to further the researches of the Society or of any of its Members. In yours, Sir, I am bound by many marks of your friendly attention to take a particular interest and am very much Your obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH, 25 *March* [1813?]

[*Willis's Current Notes*, 1857]

TO MESSRS LONGMAN & CO.

GENTLEMEN,—I am favoured with your letter enclosing that of Mr. Capel Loft¹ whose good opinion and polite expression of it I beg you will make my respectful acknowledgments. If I do not feel at liberty to join my name to the respectable list of those who have subscribed

¹ Capell Loft (1751-1824), miscellaneous writer. He was the son of Christopher Loft, private secretary of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and Anne, sister of Edward Capell, the editor of *Shakespeare*. Called to the bar in 1775, he studied political law. He corresponded with most of the literary characters of the time. In November 1798 he secured the publication of the *Farmer's Boy* by Robert Bloomfield, and was ridiculed for his pains in a note to Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. He was a staunch upholder of Napoleon. He was "a good classical scholar, a great lover of literature and of natural history, an enthusiast in music, an authority on botany, and a skilled astronomer."—*D.N.B.*

to recall Mrs. Siddons to the Stage I have at least the merit of being disinterested in my neutrality for nothing that I can hope to see on the stage will I am conscious give me so much pleasure as I received the last time I saw Mrs. Siddons. But I have a great respect for a resolution maturely adopted and carried into execution with such circumstances of peculiar solemnity nor can I with a good conscience urge my friend to depart from it. Such a parting as took place between her and the public suited her genius and their gratitude but it is a scene which cannot be renewed when advance of years shall render retirement no longer a matter of choice but of absolute necessity. When Mrs. Siddons was last here her health was extremely indifferent and while her performance on the stage retained its inimitable excellence it seemed to me that her constitution was gradually becoming less able to support the fatigues of her profession. The moment of retreat to private life therefore seemed to me well-chosen while she yet enjoyed the full possession of her powers and while ease and retirement might be supposed to restore and confirm her health. The public have seen Mrs. Siddons set in the full blaze of her fame and I would not were I in her case the die being once thrown return to a most laborious profession at a period of life when the laws of Nature do not permit us to hope she could long retain the physical strength necessary for impassioned characters. I am conscious that in giving these reasons for declining the request now made to me I am setting my judgement in opposition to those of others better qualified to decide upon the propriety of the important step which they are recommending. But I am strengthened in my own opinion by recollecting the consequences of resuming the theatrical profession after retirement in several performers of eminence.

I beg you will communicate these particulars to Mr. Loft as the result of a good deal of reflection and of that interest with which I have always regarded the inimitable

subject of our correspondence both in her public and private character. I am always Gentlemen Your most obedt Serv

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 27 March 1813

I observe you have published a copy of the *book*¹: pray send me one under Mr. Frelings cover whose permission I have for such an occasional liberty. The same feeling with regard to Mrs. Siddons is universal among literary persons here, so far as I have opportunity of knowing.

[*Hansard Watt*]

TO JAS. ELLIS ²

MY DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure of receiving your kind letter some time since and only delayed answering it, until I should have it in my power to send you a copy of *Rokeby* in which you will find I have availed myself of some of the information which I collected upon Reedwater, and that our friend Robin of Risingham, whom we sought so long has not been utterly forgotten.

Many thanks for your kind notices on Border matters. I have picked up one or two Northumbrian anecdotes which may interest you. In the very curious confession of the horse-stealer, if my memory fails me not, mention is made of *Luck-in-a-Bag* as the cant name of one of the Reedsdale thieves. In Patten's history of the affair in

¹ C. V. Williams's *The Book, complete; being the whole of the Depositions on the Investigation of the Conduct of the Princess of Wales, &c. with an Historical Preface*. 8vo. London: 1813. *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 255.

² Ellis had written a long letter on 17th February touching on "the Reedswire Fight," the migration of the Borderers after 1603, and Camden's account of the above fight: "The Borderers are there (I mean in the translation of 1675) called Ranksiders a term I do not recollect to have seen elsewhere nor do I know its meaning unless it is derived from *Ran* a Saxon word signifying open or public Theft in opposition to private Stealing." He then gives a number of notes on historical points in the *Minstrelsy*, the *Lay*, etc.

1715, mention is made of John Hunter, a north Tynedale man, a bold and adventurous fellow, following partly the profession of a smuggler between England and Scotland, to whom the Earl of Derwentwater gave the command of a troop of horse.¹ Douglas a brother of the laird of Fingland in Tiviotdale had a similar appointment, and as the interest of these new captains lay among the moss-troopers, it is said that an old borderer observed, when the insurgents had marched, that the rebellion had its advantages after all, since he could leave the stable door unlocked and sleep sound now that Luck-in-a-Bag, and the rest had taken up a new vocation. In a note, we are told that Luck-in-a-Bag was the "nickname of a famous midnight trader among horses." In the same piece it is also said that there was an old man in Northumberland acting as a setter or spy among the banditti who had been concerned in breaking into Sir John Clerk's house.

Now of this exploit also I have got a minute account. The rogues entered when the family were at church all excepting the old knight himself who barricaded his own apartment and made the best defence he could, but in searching the house for plunder some of them chanced to light upon the bellfry, and in ascending the winding stair they naturally enough used the bell-rope for a support, supposing it hung there for that purpose; this had the effect of alarming the neighbouring village and the people in the church, so that the thieves carried off little or no booty. Sir John leaves an account of the whole affair in his own hand-writing. He was a man of talents, and one of the commissioners for the Union.

Rank-rider means, I believe, strong or powerful rider.²

¹ Robert Patten (*fl.* 1715), historian of the Jacobite rebellion of 1715. "Patten figures as 'Creeping Bob' in Sir Walter Besant's *Dorothy Forster*, an historical novel of the Northumbrian share in the rising."—*D.N.B.* The title of his history is *The History of the late Rebellion: with original papers, and characters of the principal Noblemen and Gentlemen concern'd in it. [With an appendix, containing the Earl of Mar's Journal, etc.]* J. Warner: London, 1717. 8vo.

² *New Eng. Dicty.* gives also the meaning "moss-trooper," "highwayman."

Rank is applied in Old Scotch to signify strength of person and strength of sound, as in English it is applied to strong smells. I think the expression usually, but by no means uniformly, conveys something unfavourable, as, a strong wicked man, or a strong harsh voice. These secondary or oblique meanings of words occur frequently.

By the way, Patten the historian aforesaid, who had been chaplain to Forster, but recanted after the failure of the insurrection, and published an account of it adapted to the taste of the victors, gives a curious account of your predecessor, John Hall, of Otterburne ; he says he was an excellent farmer and managed his estate to great advantage, but sustained two grievous losses, 1st by an unexpected fire which consumed the house he lived in and all the offices, farm-yard, and stocking ; 2ndly by a flood which carried of a plentiful crop just when it should have been led into the barn-yard. These two misfortunes were accounted a judgment on Mr. Hall for not preventing a rencontre (of which he was apprized) between a Mr. Fenwick and Septimus [Ferdinando] Forster, member for the county, in which the former killed the latter, and was afterwards executed for the murder at Newcastle. He is said to have been of a fierce and passionate temper, which got him the name of Mad Jack Hall of Otterbourne. "Fate," adds the Rev. author, "pursued him to his untimely death, where he denied his faith, and made a strange exit." I shall be glad if you find anything in these trifles new or interesting, and am ever, with best compliments to Mrs. Ellis, Your obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH, 3rd April, 1813.

[*Ellis Letters*]

TO JOHN BELL, JUNR., QUAYSIDE, NEWCASTLE

DEAR SIR,—I shall be very proud to have my name entered upon your Northumbrian Society of Antiquaries as a non-residing member, if they will do me so much honour. I am truly ashamed of robbing your library of the curious collection of ballads, and make a very indifferent acknowledgement for such a compilation in sending you *Rokeby*, which I republished some years¹ since, with copious notes. You may find something in it which interests you as a Borderer. I am dear Sir, your obliged servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINB. 3 April [1813 ?]

[*Willis's Current Notes*]

TO MISS SMITH

MY DEAR MISS SMITH,—This accompanies a copy of *Rokeby* which I wish you to accept for the sake of the author. I also send a letter of Sophia which has long been in my writing desk but as childrens epistles are not gospel any more than madmens it skills not much when they are delivered. I heard a very pleasant and therefore very acceptable report of you both as a public person and as a friend from Lady Alvanley a few days ago. She is a kind warm-hearted friend and seems much interested in your success. I have been much teased lately with applications to join the subscription for the recall of Mrs. Siddons and have at length with great reluctance for undoubtedly it is a delicate subject been obliged to give my reasons for declining. In fact she will do a great injustice to herself if she suffers herself to be lured back to a situation of such labour when her constitution has obviously suffered so much. I wonder if these ladies and gentlemen have subscribed to make her immortal and

¹ 'Years' must be an error for 'weeks.' *Rokeby* was issued in December 1812, four editions followed in 1813, the sixth in 1815. Scott was admitted to the Society on 7th April 1813. See also note, p. 525.

unattackable by age or by decay for I think that is the only thing that can render their proposal reasonable. The parting was made just at the time it should have been retaining enough of her astonishing powers to command our admiration while the unavoidable decay of strength and constitution reconciled the public to losing her. I hope she will not be cajoled into returning for she can never repeat the same impressive parting or receive from the public such testimonies of regret and esteem. These things happen but once and *more last words* are always dangerous.

We have had John Kemble here for some weeks who is now doubtless by far our first artist among the actors. He has been fashionable and has drawn great houses much to the advantage of Harry Siddons whose house was not much frequented in the beginning of the season. Mr. Pinkerton the historian has had a tragedy here but it was not successful. The interest was of a disagreeable kind and the scenes not connected so artfully as to produce dramatic effect otherwise the poetry has I think considerable merit. We have not yet seen Coleridge's play¹ but are to have it on Saturday for Terrys benefit. I doubt it will make no great impression for excepting Terry and Mrs. H. Siddons we are heinously unprovided for any tragic effort.

Pray write soon and let me know what you are to do this summer and whether there be any chance of our seeing you in Edinburgh. I am detained here for the present by some official duty but I trust to get out of town in a few days. I have only made one visit to Abbotsford since our vacation took place and had the pleasure to see all my infant trees in good health. Adieu my dear Miss Smith and believe me ever your sincere friend

EDINR. 5 April [1813]

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ *Remorse: a Tragedy*. According to *F.L.* it was acted in Edinburgh in April 1813.

TO R. P. GILLIES

EDINBURGH, *Monday* [April? 1813]

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very sorry it will not be in my power to wait upon you again at Kale-time, till I return from Abbotsford, my time being already occupied by far too much of engagements abroad, and too much to do at home. When I return, I shall be happy to meet Sir Brooke in Heriot Row.¹

Pray don't talk of yourself in the way you do. Your health, it is true, is not such as I sincerely wish it to be, but then you have many means of alleviating the tedium of indisposition, both by your pleasure in perusing the works of others, and your own

‘Skill to soothe the lagging hour,
With no inglorious song.’

You must not, therefore, allow yourself to be depressed by your complaints, but seek amusement in those harmless and elegant pursuits, which will best divert your mind from dwelling upon them. I am sensible that it is more easy to recommend than to practise that command of spirit which abstracts us from the immediate source of

¹ The Sir Brooke mentioned in this letter was Sir Brooke Boothby (1743-1824), a poet who in his early life joined the literary circle at Lichfield composed of Miss Seward, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, Thomas Day, and the Edgeworths, and formed the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson. When living for some time in France he became a friend and earnest defender of Rousseau from the “wanton butcherly attack” made by Burke. Among his works may be mentioned two upholding the principles of the French Revolution; *Britannicus, a Tragedy, from the French of Racine* (1803); *Fables and Satires, with a preface on the Esopæan Fable* (Edinburgh, 1809). Gillies, in his *Recollections of Sir Walter Scott*, recalls Weber's allusion to Sir Brooke Boothby, residing at Edinburgh in 1811, as “a member of the Della Cruscan College. ‘No, no, mein werther herr,’ answered Scott, ‘do not include Sir Brooke among them; what he has published in the poetical department is of a very different character, distinguished rather by simplicity and good taste. Had not Sir Brooke, in his younger years, been too much of a fine gentleman to give himself much trouble about book-making, he might, probably, have risen to considerable eminence as an author. By the by, he has given us some fragments for the “Annual Register,” which, though trifles, are such as no ordinary man could have written.’”

pain or languor. But it is no less necessary that this exertion should be made, and really in this world the lots of men are so variously assigned to them, that each may find in his own case, circumstances of pleasure as well as points of pain unknown to others.

Excuse the freedom I use, and believe me, with every kind wish, very much yours,
W. S.

Many thanks for the novels. I will take care of them, and safely return them.

[*Gillies's Memoirs*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

9th [April?] ¹ 1813

MY DEAR MORRITT,—Your letter contains admirable news. I wish you would give the raw author of Triermain a hoist to notice by speaking of him now and then in those parts where a word spoken is sure to have a hundred echoes. I mean your evening parties and if you enquire for him now and then in a bookseller's shop and be surprized he has not heard of the work you will do the Bridal and the author yeoman's service. I hear Jeffrey has really bestowd great praise on the poem and means to give it a place in his review. It has not he says my great artery but there is more attention to stile more elegance and ornament etc. etc. etc. We will see however what he really will say to it in his review for there is no sure augury from his private conversation. I inclose a copy under Mr. Freling of the Post Offices cover. It has sold wonderfully here but has not yet started in London that we can learn.

This delightful weather will I hope be of service to Mrs. Morritts health. We had our snow storm too but

¹ This letter is dated March in the original MS. But as Morritt's letter, to which this is a reply, is dated 3rd April, the correct date is probably 9th April.

it came in the most undeniable shape in the world. One day though dreading weather as little as any one it blew such a tempest of wind and snow that I could not go along Princes Street to get to the Register House but was fairly blown home again and glad to get into harbour. It is the only day in my life that I ever remember having been fairly turnd back by foul weather upon dry land.

I was greatly delighted with the skirmish between the Dramatic Empress and her trusty ally and the lyrical princess¹—I must take care to keep out of the way of the latter whose wrath I have, it seems, incurd by ungallantly neglecting some verses which she sent me many years since and which I am afraid I postponed acknowledging until acknowledgment would have no longer been gracious. However I am somewhat of Sir Lucius O'Trigger's opinion that the quarrel is a pretty quarrel as it stands and hang them that first seek to accommodate it say I. For ought I know I am in equally disgrace with the other belligerent power for the owls of your good city who are subscribing to invite her back to the stage not content with various indirect applications which I paid no attention to, at length formally applied to me (the sapient Capel Loft² being their representative) through the medium of no less persons than Messrs. Longman & Co/. So I was obliged to open my oracular jaws and give

¹ The "lyrical princess" was Miss Margaret Holford, afterwards Mrs. Hodson (1778-1852). Her first work was *Wallace, or the Fight of Falkirk: a Metrical Romance* (1809). A collection of *Poems* appeared in 1811. In 1832 her last work, *The Lives of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa and Francisco Pizarro, from the Spanish of Don Manuel Josef Quintana*, was dedicated to Southey, with whom and with Coleridge and Landor she was acquainted. Morritt, in his letter of 3rd April, gave Scott an amusing account of this feud between Miss Holford and Mrs. Siddons. Miss Holford "was presented one evening at Sotheby's to Mrs. Siddons; and the tragic princess, being on the high ropes, returned her salute with a dignified Stage curtsy. The poetess mistook her grandeur for insolence, and rushed round the room telling everybody this great neglect and insult, with comments not very soft on the tragic Queen. Mrs. Fitzhugh, who is chief eater of toads to Mrs. Siddons, took up the cudgel, and the scene at last almost proceeded to an attack upon their caps reciprocally between this female Wallace and her South'ron foe."—*Walpole Collection*, cited in Partington, *op. cit.*

² See above, p. 243.

this worthy federation my reasons for not joining them to ask Mrs. Siddons to do an unwise thing. Now although these were stated with great retenue and with the highest praises on Mrs. Siddons past and Mrs. Siddons present yet I am sensible that even doubts expressed as to Mrs. Siddons future will not be very agreeable to a palate which has been accustomed to the sugard eloquence of Mrs. Fitzhugh and Lady Millbank. However I must hold fast mine integrity for I would not for the world do her the injury of even seeming to accede to such a foolish proposal especially as I rather think her printed answer had in it a sort of *Nolo episcopari*.

The 8vo. *Rokeby* is now published here and almost exhausted though the Editn. was a double one, *i.e.* 6000—they are going to press again. The 4to was over-printed by 500 or 1000 yet the Ballantynes have only about 30 of their share which was $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the whole.

I have had a most acceptable present from Lady Alvanley—two views very well done indeed by Miss Arden¹ one of Mortham tower and one of the Tees and Greta in the park at Rokeby. They are really extremely clever very like the scenes they represent and require none of the allowance usually indulged to amateurs. By the way I have in safe keeping Mrs. Morritts drawing of Mortham tower and have had it copied. I wish I knew a safe way of forwarding the original.

The news continue capital. The Collector of the Customs at Leith says that on tuesday last more entries were made for exports than had ever been made on one day before. I hope they do not mean seriously to send the Duke of Cumberland to Hanover—Surely we have made enow of such experiments—Charlotte sends kind love to Mrs. Morritt and I am ever most truly Yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 9 *March* 1813.

[*Law*]

¹ Probably one of the Misses Arden mentioned in Scott's journal under 30th April 1828.

To [CLARKE WHITFIELD]

ABBOTSFORD NEAR MELROSE *April* 18 [1813 ?]

DEAR SIR,—The above is at your service if you like it.¹ As I wish to send it immediately I have not taken time to read it over so I will be obliged to you if you will give me an opportunity of seeing it in print. I will not fail to do what I can to get names but I am a poor solicitor in that way and as I go little into company my acquaintance among those likely to be interested in music is much limited. My wife begs you will put her name & her daughters (Miss Sophia Scott) upon your list. In a short time I dare say I will send you something better—

Here is beautiful weather ! Snow two inches thick & the thermometer at 38, don't you shiver to hear of it—If it last but 24 hours it will kill many thousand pounds worth of lambs & put down our sheep market with a vengeance. Yours truly

(Signed) WALTER SCOTT

[*Owen D. Young*]

To LADY ABERCORN

22nd April 1813

MANY thanks my dearest friend for your kind attention about the verses. They are very clever indeed and had it not been that my friend Lydia White lies rather open to be practised upon I should never have suspected them though in the circumstances I deemed further inquiry

¹ *The Foray*, beginning "The last of our steers on the board has been spread," which was the first song in "Twelve Vocal Pieces, Most of them with Original Poetry, Written expressly for this work by Mrs Joanna Baillie, Jas. Hogg, the Scots Shepherd, Walter Scott Esqr., John Stewart Esqr., William Smyth Esqr., Lord Byron. Composed & Respectfully Inscribed to Mrs William Frere, by John Clarke, Mus: Doc: Cam: Vol. i. London, Printed for the Author." The subscribers include the names of Walter Scott and his daughter Sophia. A volume ii., with the title otherwise the same, was also published. The British Museum catalogues both (1816?), no doubt because the second volume contains pieces from *Paul's Letters*, published in that year. The first volume, however, was probably published in 1814 or 1815.

due for the sake of the public.¹ It was very handsome of the author to put me on my guard and I beg you will express how kindly I take it of him. I understood from Miss White's second letter that I could get no feasible account of the authenticity of the verses and our friend Lady Melville when in Ireland had heard of the quiz and wrote to me about it. I put the lines into the *Register* by way of contributing to a work which I think very well of. Southey conducts the historical part but I think (with many brilliant passages) he has not the power of condensing the information which he conveys. He is *lengthy* as the Americans say uses exclamations & is more argumentative than history should be. But on the whole his annals will hereafter be found very valuable recording much which will otherwise be likely to pass away. I have directed the Ballantynes to send the parcel by the mail as your Ladyship directed. It is less entertaining than I could wish.

The *Bridal of Triermain* is the book [which] has excited most interest here. Jeffrey lauds it highly I am informed and is one day to throw it at my head. I have added a little book called *Poetical epistles*² or some such name only for the sake of the first two pieces or rather of two or three paragraphs of them, or rather for two lines applying exactly to a view from Abbotsford—

Soft slept the mist on cloven Eildon laid
And distant Melrose peep'd from leafy shade.

¹ Modern verses which had been sent to Scott as an original poem by Swift.

² By the Rev. Robert Morehead, afterwards Dean of Edinburgh and subsequently Rector of Easington, Yorkshire. He published anonymously *Poetical Epistles : and Specimens of Poetical Translation, particularly from Petrarch and Dante*. Edinburgh, 1813. The lines Scott quotes should run :

"Calm slept the clouds on cloven Eildon laid,
And distant Melrose peep'd from leafy shade."

This Second Epistle, written in 1808, also contains the lines :

"Nay,—! the task were much too hard,
To trace the footsteps of the border-bard ;
Leave we fair Melrose to her happier lot,
My feeble voice pursues no lay of Scott !"

See letter to Morehead, 1st June, pp. 283-84.

The attempt to render Theocritus into broad vulgar Scotch is totally unsuccessful. I also add *Horace in London* by the authors of the *Rejected Addresses* but which does not add to their fame. In the first place many of the topics they have touched are gone bye for who now thinks of Mrs. Clarke or Duke and Darling? But besides the public will not bear too much jocularly from one quarter—fun upon fun is apt to grow a little tiresome—accordingly *Horace in London* has been coldly received and the authors who were as Lions of the first order received into the fashionable menageries last season are no longer in the same request. So at least says the echo we hear of London tattle. I desired the Ballantynes to add three thick volumes of Eastern tales¹ the most complete collection of the kind ever published which I delight in most extremely. I fear you will find the print though beautiful for the size too small for your eyes but they are an excellent stock-book for the Saloon. A volume of popular romances belong to the set on a plan which will be continued if the publick like them. To all these I have added what are worth all the rest Crabbe's new tales strongly marked with his manner diction and style of thinking but very interesting from the deep insight which they afford into human character. It is scarcely possible to look at his portraits without recognising them as painted from nature though one may never have met with the originals whom they resemble. Any of these books which your ladyship may not like on perusal may be returned if you think proper and any order to my friendly publishers I always consider as an obligation on myself.

I have an old copy of the history of the highwaymen.² It is illwritten and illselected yet curious. What a book

¹ *Tales of the East, &c., with Introductory Dissertation by Henry Weber*, 3 vols., royal 8vo., Edinburgh, 1812. *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 43.

² Capt. Alexander Smith's *Complete History of the Lives and Robberies of the most notorious Highwaymen, etc.* With MS. note by Sir W. S. 3 vols., 12mo, London, 1719-20.

might be made out of the *causes célèbres* of England, collected upon a principle similar to that adopted by the French editors of that popular work. The criminal records of Scotland would be still more extraordinary for joined to the peculiarity of manners the custom or rule of taking down the whole evidence in writing which prevailed till within these thirty years afforded complete materials for such a selection which by the way I have often thought of. I am now far advanced with *Swift*. When my task is over I intend to arrange for publication a very complete collection of songs and poetry respecting the insurrections for I will not call them rebellions of 1715 and 1745 for the purpose of making a supplement to* the *Border Minstrelsy* and bringing down the Ballad history of Scotland to the middle of the eighteenth century.

You may depend on our meeting at Dumfries in August and I will go on a day's journey with you if I do not increase the difficulty of your accommodation which with so large a suite must necessarily be considered.—
Adieu, my dearest friend, God bless you, W. S.

There is at Dublin a man of great but eccentric genius named Mathurine.¹ His father held an office of emolu-

¹ Charles Robert Maturin (1782-1824), the Irish novelist and dramatist. He distinguished himself at Trinity College, Dublin, where he obtained a scholarship in 1798 and graduated B.A. in 1800, but discontinued his university career when he married. He became curate of St. Peter's, Dublin. "His stipend was slender, and he was partly supported by his father until the latter's sudden dismissal from office on a charge of malversation. His innocence was eventually established . . . but . . . the family were reduced to great embarrassment. Maturin set up a school in addition to his curacy, and also betook himself to literature." He produced three romances: *Montorio* (of the Radcliffian school), *The Wild Irish Boy*, and *The Milesian Chief*. Scott reviewed *Montorio* with great appreciation, and "paid 'The Milesian Chief' the higher compliment of imitating it in 'The Bride of Lammermoor.'" About 1813 Maturin's imprudence . . . compelled him to give up his house, and consequently his school. In these desperate circumstances" he sent Scott the MS. of *Bertram*, a tragedy. Some time in 1814 Scott recommended the play to Kemble, and when he declined it, submitted it to Byron, who sent the author £50 and then introduced the play to Kean. After some hesitation Kean produced it at Drury Lane in 1816, and it brought Maturin £1000. In 1820 he produced his masterpiece, the novel called *Melmoth the Wanderer*,

ment in the post-office but from circumstances of inaccuracy which however was not held to affect character lost his situation and was thrown from opulence to indigence. The son in whom I am interested merely from his high talent was a clergyman in the diocese of the Bishop of Meath who tells me that he behaved remarkably well but held tenets too calvinistic for the church and which were likely to prevent his progress. He is now settled in Dublin and keeps I understand a boarding-house for young gentlemen studying at Trinity College. He is an excellent classical scholar and a man of general information on all subjects with the power of expressing himself powerfully either in verse or prose. Two of his novels fell into my hands and struck me much as evincing a strong though very wild and sombre imagination and great powers of expression. His powers of language indeed sometimes outrun his ideas like the man who was run away with by his own legs—I think this man really deserving of patronage from his talents and capable of serving the Duke of Richmond's administration by his pen should it be thought worth while to enquire after him. At present he seems to be in the way of adding another example to the long roll of unfortunate men of talents [whom] Ireland has produced. If your ladyship can turn the eye of any great person upon him who may be willing to patronize I cannot from the account I hear of Mr. Mathurine from the Bishop of Meath suppose it will be ill bestowed.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

like *Montorio* in the manner of Mrs. Radcliffe. “ ‘Melmoth’ had great influence on the rising romantic school of France, and was half imitated, half parodied, in a sequel by Balzac, whose combination of it with the popular German story of ‘The Bottle Imp’ has given hints to Mr. Stevenson.”—*D.N.B.*

The “Eastern Tales” and “history of the highwaymen” mentioned on p. 256 are: (1) *Tales of the East, etc.*; (2) *Capt. Alex. Smith's, etc.*

TO HENRY BREVOORT¹

MY DEAR SIR,—I beg you to accept my best thanks for the uncommon degree of entertainment which I have received from the most excellently jocose history of New York. I am sensible that as a stranger to American parties and politics I must lose much of the concealed satire of the piece but I must own that looking at the simple and obvious meaning only I have never read anything so closely resembling the stile of Dean Swift as the annals of Diedrich Knickerbocker. I have been employed these few evenings in reading them aloud to Mrs. S. and two ladies who are our guests and our sides have been absolutely tense with laughing. I think too, there are passages which indicate that the author possesses powers of a different kind & has some touches which remind me much of Sterne. I beg you will have the kindness to let me know when Mr. Irvine takes pen in hand again for assuredly I shall expect a very great treat which I may chance never to hear of but through your kindness. Believe me Dear Sir Your obliged humble Svn.

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 23 April 1813

[*Grenville Kane*]

¹ "Scott had received 'the History of New York by Knickerbocker' [Washington Irving], shortly after its appearance in 1812, from an accomplished American traveller, Mr. Brevoort."—LOCKHART.

Brevoort wrote to Scott on 15th April thanking him for letters of introduction to Campbell and Richardson and for "the kindness with which you had the goodness to honour me during my sojournment in Edinburgh. No circumstance has befallen me on this side the Atlantic which I prize so highly. . . . I send you a Book written by my my [*sic*] dear friend Mr Washington Irving, brother of the Mr Irving whom you met at Mr W. Erskine's. . . . I shall take the liberty of giving some some [*sic*] information as to the practicability of securing copyright in the States." On 24th May he acknowledged *this* letter and sent, by Erskine, Irving's *Salmagundi*.

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE¹

I THOUGHT you had known me better my dear Sir than to interpret my long and ungracious silence into any thing still more ungracious than my invariable and unconquerable habits of procrastination where letter writing is the subject. My best apology would perhaps be the necessity I am under of writing a great deal of one kind or another which often makes me envy the reverend hermit of Prague who as the Clown in 12th Night informs us never saw pen and ink but I believe the real apology is the wish to put off my letter till I have something to send or something to say, more than expressing those sentiments which I can never fail to entertain of your kindness but which are when confined to mere expressions scarcely worth a friends paying postage for.— I think it was a Lazerone of Naples who being exhorted to work by an English gentleman of whom he asked charity, answered very feelingly Ah Sir ! did you but know how lazy I am ! Even so it is with your Northern friend who wishes no greater happiness than to stroll about Tweedside whole summer days and make himself too sleepy to write a line at night which is much my case at present. But to escape from my apologies which are rascally bad ones, I hope you will give me an opportunity of pleading my apology in person by paying a visit to Scotland now you are in Britain. We must leave this little spot in a few days and will then be at Edinburgh. I fear your suit still detains you in London, and as the Chancellor does not add a rapidity of decision to his other good qualities, I daresay you will have time to pay another visit to our good town, when I will take it upon me to shew you Edinburgh and its environs to more advantage than you saw it the last time. I assure you on my honor that I have no friend upon earth who has not the same most warrantable

¹ On 20th April Hartstonge had written from London a pathetic appeal to know why Scott's letters had ceased : " My warmest pride & the wish that constituted my chief happiness was to be worthy of your friendship," etc.

subject of complaint against me that you have, and though I certainly have no little to count upon the indulgence of any correspondent more especially so active and kind a one as you, yet it is some mitigation to say that I am in debt letters (and some of a tremendous old date) to all whom I love and respect—to Ellis to Gifford to Heber to both the Edgeworths to Crabbe and Lord knows whom besides for it turns my head to think of my iniquities. However I feel great hopes in being able to plead my cause *viva voce*. I will shew you what progress I have made in Swift, which I hope soon to get out, it has been a most Herculean task, and has been of late my principal occupation at any rate if you cannot come down immediately you cannot return better than by Portpatrick when you think of drawing homewards.

Your poems were much admired here by some good judges but like most miscellaneous collections are not so rapid in sale as they deserve. Many thanks for your beautiful copy—I hope you got the Trierman safe—it is a curious little work the author unknown. Believe me dear sir very much your *penitent* & truly obligd W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, 23rd April 1813.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO LADY LOUISA STUART

ABBOTSFORD, 28th April 1813

DEAR LADY LOUISA,—Nothing can give me more pleasure than to hear from you, because it is both a most acceptable favour to me, and also a sign that your own spirits are recovering their tone. Ladies are, I think, very fortunate in having a resource in work at a time when the mind rejects intellectual amusement. Men have no resource but striding up and down the room, like a bird that beats itself to pieces against the bars of its cage; whereas needle-work is a sort of sedative, too mechanical to worry the mind by distracting it from the points on

which its musings turn, yet gradually assisting it in regaining steadiness and composure ; for so curiously are our bodies and minds linked together, that the regular and constant employment of the former on any process, however dull and uniform, has the effect of tranquillizing, where it cannot disarm, the feelings of the other. I am very much pleased with the lines on the guinea note, and if Lady Douglas does not object, I would willingly mention the circumstance in the Edinburgh Annual Register. I think it will give the author great delight to know that his lines had attracted attention, and *had* sent the paper on which they were recorded, " heaven-directed to the poor." Of course I would mention no names. There was, as your Ladyship may remember, some years since, a most audacious and determined murder committed on a porter belonging to the British Linen Company's Bank at Leith, who was stabbed to the heart in broad daylight, and robbed of a large sum in notes.¹ If ever this crime comes to light, it will be through the circumstance of an idle young fellow having written part of a playhouse song on one of the notes, which, however, has as yet never appeared in circulation.

I am very glad you like Rokeby, which is nearly out of fashion and memory with me. It has been wonderfully popular, about ten thousand copies having walked off already, in about three months, and the demand continuing faster than it can be supplied. As to my imitator, the Knight of Triermain, I will endeavour to convey to Mr. Gillies ² (*puisque Gillies il est*) your Ladyship's very just

¹ This murder was perpetrated in November 1806. See vol. i. p. 337.

² See extract from Lady Louisa's letter of 22nd April (to which Scott is replying), *F.L.*, i. 282. She had also reported Lady Douglas finding "a Paisley guinea note, pretty dirty and greasy, on the back of which was a blotting that by chance she observed to look like verse. With much pains I deciphered these lines :

Farewell my note ! & wheresoe'er ye wend
Shun gaudy scenes to be the poor man's friend.
Ye've left a poor one, go to one as poor,
And drive despair & hunger from his door."

She was to keep it sacredly for some object of charity.

strictures on the Introduction to the second Canto. But if he takes the opinion of a hacked old author like myself, he will content himself with avoiding such bevues in future, without attempting to mend those which are already made. There is an ominous old proverb which says, *confess and be hanged* ; and truly if an author acknowledges his own blunders, I do not know who he can expect to stand by him ; whereas, let him confess nothing, and he will always find some injudicious admirers to vindicate even his faults. So that I think after publication the effect of criticism should be prospective, in which point of view I dare say Mr. G. will take your friendly hint, especially as it is confirmed by that of the best judges who have read the poem.—Here is beautiful weather for April ! an absolute snow-storm mortifying me to the core by retarding the growth of all my young trees and shrubs.—Charlotte begs to be most respectfully remembered to your Ladyship and Lady D. We are realizing the nursery tale of the man and his wife who lived in a vinegar bottle, for our only sitting room is just twelve feet square, and my Eve alleges that I am too big for our paradise. To make amends, I have created a tolerable garden, occupying about an English acre, which I begin to be very fond of. When one passes forty, an addition to the quiet occupations of life becomes of real value, for I do not hunt and fish with quite the relish I did ten years ago. Adieu, my dear Lady Louisa, and all good attend you.

WALTER SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO MISS SOPHIA SCOTT

MY DEAR SOPHIA,—I received your letter in which you say nothing of Walter's schooling. I hope that goes on well. I am sorry to say the poor Cuddy is no more : he lost the use of the hind legs so we were obliged to have him shot out of humanity. This will vex little Anne but as the animal could never have been of the least use to

her she has the less reason to regret his untimely death ; and I will study to give her something that she will like as well to make amends—namely a most beautiful peacock and pea hen so tame that they come to the porch and feed out of the children's hands—they were a present from Mertoun and I will give them to little Anne to make amends for this family loss of the Donkey.

I have got a valuable addition to the Musæum some of the hair of Charles I cut from the head when his coffin was discoverd about a month ago in St. Georges Chapel at Windsor. Dr. Baillie begg'd it for me of Sir Henry Halford under whose inspection the coffin was open'd. The hair is a light brown. This is my best news—the worst is that every thing is suffering from cold and drought.

Give my kind love to Walter Anne and little Charles. I assure you the gardens are well lookd after but we want a little rain sadly. The Russians have taken Dantzwick and you have escaped reading some very cramp gazettes consequently a good deal of yawning—Mama joins in kind Compliments to Miss Miller and [I] am always Your affectionate papa

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 3 May very like 3 March in temperature.
[1813]

The Mertoun family will be at Dumbrecks on Wednesday. It will be civil for you to call on them (as the young ladies are there) on thursday or friday.

[Law]

[Private]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE ¹

ABBOTSFORD 4th May 1813

DEAR JAMES,—I have written John at length on the present state of affairs instructing him that unless better prospects should open with a certainty of being very

¹ The letters concerned with financial difficulties which run through this year I must leave (with the Introduction) to speak for themselves. The publishing business was on its last legs and the concern of the year was to wind it up without actual bankruptcy. It is impossible to follow now

speedily realized he shall make sales at London on our quire stock (valued at £14000^u) for at least £2000^u without minding what discount he is obliged to give & that he shall exchange on the same stock to the extent of £3000 or £4000 more with the purpose of selling off the books received in exchange for whatever they will fetch in Edinr. Between these two expedients we may raise £4000^u or £5000^u & obtain time finally to sell off every thing in Decr. or January. The loss in discounts will be very great but certainly it is better [to] submit to it at once than labour on in constant anxiety & apprehension. The loss of the whole sum I put into the business (£1500) will not essentially injure my fortune & I have no idea of asking you to bear any share of it though you should have been wellcome to your proportion of profit had any accrued. This is the only real & effectual cure for our embarassments & the contingent loss must be submitted to. Meanwhile I have saved the copyrights though at great loss & expence and consequently retain all the power of serving the office & I trust of providing for John also although it must be under superintendence. When I come to town we must have heard from John—meanwhile I hope on thursday to have his London address from you. I have no expectation that he will be able to better my proposal—We shall then fix

the doings of John Ballantyne, which from time to time add fresh difficulties. According to Sir James Gibson-Craig, Scott at one point wrote to Constable that he could no longer go on and desired him to call a meeting of his creditors. Constable dissuaded him from this step and suggested an appeal to the Duke of Buccleuch. This is not quite borne out by the letters, from which it seems that Constable suggested securing help from a friend, from a source “independent of your present and ordinary business resources” (*Constable*, iii. 21), and that it was Scott who thought of the Duke as a possible resort. Constable, it will appear from the letters, comes into the affair in May. It is not till August that appeal has to be made to the Duke. The letters reflect vividly the fluctuations of Scott’s hopes and fears. *The Lord of the Isles* is the chief new factor on which he bases his and Constable’s expectations. *Waverley* seems to have come in as an afterthought, but it was the enormous success of the new experiment which banished anxiety and reinspired the hopes of the sanguine poet and publisher. But see Appendix, vol. i, for fuller versions of some of the letters printed here from Lockhart. These have come to light since these pages were set up.

on some order for the printing house affairs securing you a proper (though it must be an oeconomical) provision untill the debt is paid off—I should not greatly care were the whole quire stock sold for £6000 or £7000 though the last be 50 per cent under its estimated value but, sell for what it will, it must be sold & by auction if no other way will do. To do without such a sale it would be necessary to raise between £4000 & £5000 in the course of the next three months & to keep that large sum floating by renewals for at least nine months or twelve months more which is impossible in the present times. I did not like to propose this untill I had given full time for John to try his own method— But when after advancing about £5000 I see the business totally incapable of carrying itself on it is time it should be closed at whatever loss.

I flatter myself you will agree with all this it is really a case of necessity and must be treated as such. Meanwhile I will do all in my power to keep up the credit of the house untill these affairs are wound up. But I have neither the means to carry on these speculations further nor should I think it right in common prudence to do so—I have put this as a general proposition to you my good freind as you do not much admire figures—but I have sent John an accurate state of the calculations on which I hold it expedient to sell off our stock at what it will fetch & I know no arguments short of £3000 or £4000 ready money which can controvert my data.

I grieve to hear Terry is still unwell. I had a letter from a Mr. Richardson¹ his freind with a print of him the most striking & spirited likeness I ever saw. I have got another remarkable present from Miss Baillie a lock of the hair of Charles I being a part of what was cut from his head by Sir Henry Halford when his coffin was opened in presence of the P. Regent. Dr. Baillie begged it of his brother physician. It is a lightish brown about an inch in length.

¹ A Charles Richardson, Clapham Road, Surrey, at whose instance Terry sat for his portrait. He writes to Scott about the engraving on 24th April.

I have only to add to what I have told you of business that I trust you will not think I am acting either selfishly or precipitately. I have not proposed stopping a business which was *ex facie* profitable to others as well as to me untill I made a very great struggle to keep it on. But I cannot support it longer & any inconvenience directly affecting me would of course ruin the printing office also—to prevent which the stock¹ of J. B. & Co/ must be sold for its marketable value & all loss submitted to in silence. I will write on thursday with the order. W SCOTT

[Glen]

QUIRE STOCK

3038 Sets (2 Vol) of Edinr. Annual

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|---|---|---------|----------|
| Register 16/ | - | - | - | £2430 | |
| 100 Tales of the East | £2-12-6 | - | - | 262-10 | |
| 220 Popular tales 17/4 Say | - | - | - | 210- | 190-13-4 |
| 146 Charles I 8/ | - | - | - | 58-8 | |
| 20 Royal Do. 14/ | - | - | - | 28-14- | |
| 18 James 1st. 16/ | - | - | - | 14-14-0 | |
| 25 Do. Royal 28/ | - | - | - | 35- | 35- |
| 107 Don Roderick 4to. 10/ | - | - | - | 53-10 | |
| 124 Do. royal 8vo. 8/ | - | - | - | 50- | 49-1½ |
| 489 Do. Demi. 8vo. 6/ | - | - | - | 146-14 | |
| 50 Beaumont & Fletcher | £5-12 | - | - | 280- | |
| 50 De Foes Novels | £2-6 | - | - | 115- | |
| 119 Do. Di. last nine volumes 34/6 | - | - | - | 230- | 205-5-6 |

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| | 3911- |
| 20 pr. cent | - 806- |

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| 1730 Reg. | 1800 | |
| 2108 — | 1809 | £3911 |
| 2230 | 1810 | 2430 |
| 6068 at 16/ | — £4862-12- | 1481 |

¹ Of this selection from J. B. & Co.'s stock, it will be seen that Constable took all except the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, on which there had been an annual loss of over £1000 per annum. The remainder was disposed of from time to time in connection with the contracts for various novels, and finally with the second *Tales of my Landlord*. See *Constable*, etc., iii. 97-8.

MESSRS. ARCHD. CONSTABLE & Co

TO WALTER SCOTT ESQR.

1813

| | | | | |
|--------|--|-----------|-------------|--|
| May 18 | To 100 Tales of the East | @ £2-12-6 | £262-10- | |
| | „ 220 Popular Tales - | - 17-4 | 190-13-4 | |
| | „ 146 Charles 1st. - | - 8/- | 58- 8- | |
| | „ 20 do. Royal - | - 14/- | 14- - | |
| | „ 18 James 1st - | - 16/- | 14- 8- | |
| | „ 25 do Royal - | - 28/- | 35- - | |
| | „ 107 Don Roderick 4to. - | - 10/- | 53-10- | |
| | „ 124 do Royal - | - 8/- | 49-12- | |
| | „ 489 do Demy - | - 6/- | 146-14- | |
| | „ 50 Beaumont - | - 5-12- | 280- | |
| | „ 50 De Foe Novels - | - 2-6/- | 115- - | |
| | „ 119 do last nine Volumes | 1-14/6 | 205- 5-6 | |
| | | | £1,425- -10 | |
| | „ 28 Annual Register - | 30/- | 42- - | |
| | | | £1,467- -10 | |
| | Deduct, discount on the above | | 567- -10 | |
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| | at the Press - - - - - | - - - - - | 700- - | |
| 267 | Register 6 Vols—@ 30/- say | - - - - - | 400- - | |
| | | | £2,000 | |
| | Settled by Bills @ 6-12 & 18 - - - | - - - - - | 2,000- - | |

Recd the above Proy notes

WALTER SCOTT

To MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

DEAR SIR,—Your kindness really heaps coals of fire upon my head for you have every right to complain of me exceedingly & instead you load me with continued marks of your kindness and friendship.¹ You must really

¹ Hartstonge had received “with inexpressible delight” Scott’s letter of 23rd April and “solemnly promised I shall never again be jealous at your silence.” After talk about getting for Scott an Irish wolf-dog he goes on to say: “I enclose you Swift’s four last years of Queen Anne translated

come down to Edinr. If you do not dislike the sea you may make a short and pleasant passage that way at one 3d. the expense of being jumbled in the mail and the accomodations on board the Smacks are now in most cases very comfortable. I am working at Swift like a dragon but the life is not yet gone to press nor indeed wrote fair out. That however I can soon do having the extremes both of exertion and indolence in my composition and to prepare myself I have done nothing this fortnight but look at the water and the little imps that are one day to be trees. About the 4th June I hope to make a sally here for two or three days, as the birthday is a blank day at the Courts. If your time suits I should be delighted to shew you this place tho it has as yet very little to recommend it and what is worse you will hardly give me credit for the merit I really may claim in reclaiming it from a state of dirt and confusion utterly beyond human comprehension.

I should be delighted with a second edition of the magnanimous Hannibal who interested me quite as much as the old gentleman to whom he was the means of introducing Lord Colambre. But I should be afraid the breed may be too fierce to go loose and I am not fond of chaining up dogs. Our present pet is a bitch spaniel very pretty very caressing and a great favourite. I have also indulged in a little flirtation with a peacock and peahen, which a kind friend sent to enliven our basse cour.

The Edgeworths are now or are soon to be [in] London. I would give the world they would return by Scotland. Perhaps you may learn if there be any chance of our being so honored. If you know where they are in

into French and printed at Amsterdam &c." He is still writing from London, whence Scott's suggestion that he should come on to Edinburgh. "Hannibal" is the name of the wolf-hound in *The Absentee*. Miss Edgeworth writes to Hartstonge that she regrets not having called the dog *Brann*, "the name of the famous Irish dog of Finn." Lord Colambre is the hero of *The Absentee*. See chap. xvi. for the incident referred to.

London, I owe both Miss E. and her father an epistle which I would certainly discharge in some hope to determine their motions this way—.

I am glad to hear that you are now likely finally to have audience in your appeal and I trust the issue will be in every respect agreeable to your wishes. But even the adverse termination to such a suit is advantageous compared to the suspense of protracted litigation which is perhaps the greatest real grievance of civilized society. I shall be truly anxious to hear the issue of this protracted business. At any rate pray return by Edinburgh. Our house in Castle Street is so small or rather has so few rooms that since my family grew up, we have no spare bed. But we would reckon upon your being our dear and constant guest and you should rummage my book shelves while I am obliged to attend the Court.

I must not forget to thank you for the curious volumes which accompanied your letter. They are both interesting proofs of the Deans celebrity. I hope you will come and fetch Triermain in case it should have miscarried : it was to go in a Bookselling parcel to Dublin but my friends the Ballantynes are sometimes too hurried to mind petty commissions. At any rate I will send it from Edinburgh under Mr. Frelings cover should you (which I deprecate) think of proceeding direct to Ireland. Ever your truly obliged

W. SCOTT

On Tuesday we go to Edinbr where direct—

ABBOTSFORD 10th May, 1813.

[*Brotherton*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

ALL good things attend you my dear Miss Clephane and also Mrs. Clephane—I wish you a prosperous and pleasant journey which the weather seems at length to promise—Pray collect me as many Highland songs as you

can find—heroic especially and send me translations either in prose or poetry as the fancy hits. Kindest respects to your sister. I have got a lock of the hair cut from the head of Charles at the late discovery of his lowly grave and Platow¹ at the request of a friend is sending me a Cossack pike weilded by one of his prime warriors—So much for gem crackery—Charlotte joins in kind compliments. Adieu.

W. S.

Wednesday 12 May 1813.

[Northampton]

To JOHN BALLANTYNE

PRINTING-OFFICE, May 18th, 1813

DEAR JOHN,—After many *offs* and *ons*, and as many *projets* and *contre-projets* as the treaty of Amiens, I have at length concluded a treaty with Constable, in which I am sensible he has gained a great advantage²; but what could I do amidst the disorder and pressure of so many demands? The arrival of your long-dated bills decided my giving in, for what could James or I do with them? I trust this sacrifice has cleared our way, but many rubs remain; nor am I, after these hard skirmishes, so able to meet them by my proper credit. Constable, however, will be a zealous ally; and for the first time these many weeks I shall lay my head on a quiet pillow, for now I do think that, by our joint exertions, we shall get well through the storm, save Beaumont from depreciation, get a partner in our heavy concerns, reef our topsails, and move on securely under an easy sail. And if, on the one hand, I have sold my gold too cheap, I have, on the other,

¹ See note to letter to Patrick Murray, p. 231.

² “These and after purchases of books from the stock of J. Ballantyne & Co. were resold to the trade by Constable’s firm, at less than one half and one third of the prices at which they were thus obtained”—*Note from Mr. R. Cadell*.—LOCKHART. For correct version of this letter see vol. i, Appendix, p. 422. The date given by Lockhart May 18th should be 19th.

turned my lead to gold. Brewster¹ and Singers² are the only heavy things to which I have not given a blue eye. Had your news of Cadell's sale³ reached us here, I could not have harpooned my grampus so deeply as I have done, as nothing but Rokeby would have barbed the hook.

Adieu, my dear John. I have the most sincere regard for you, and you may depend on my considering your interest with quite as much attention as my own. If I have ever expressed myself with irritation in speaking of this business, you must impute it to the sudden, extensive, and unexpected embarrassments in which I found myself involved all at once. If to your real goodness of heart and integrity, and to the quickness and acuteness of your talents, you added habits of more universal circumspection, and, above all, the courage to tell disagreeable truths to those whom you hold in regard, I pronounce that the world never held such a man of business. These it must be your study to add to your other good qualities. Meantime, as some one says to Swift, I love you with all your failings. Pray make an effort and love me with all mine.⁴ Yours truly,

W. S.

[Lockhart]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I have just received the Bill of Sale & considered it settled upon very liberal terms & it [is] with great pleasure that I regard it as a renewal of our long friendly intercourse which as it was broken off by untoward circumstances is I trust now to be renewed upon a permanent footing of mutual interest & mutual kindness. I am very [sic] Yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 18 May 1813

[Stevenson]

¹ Dr. Brewster's edition of *Ferguson's Astronomy*. 2 vols. 8vo. Five plates. Edinb. 1811.

² William Singer's *General View of the Agriculture . . . in the County of Dumfries*. 8vo. 1812.

³ "A trade sale of Messrs. Cadell & Davies in the Strand."—LOCKHART.

⁴ For correct version of this letter see vol. i, Appendix, p. 422.

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE ¹

EDINBURGH, 21st May 1813

DEAR JOHN,—Let it never escape your recollection, that shutting your own eyes, or blinding those of your friends, upon the actual state of business, is the high road to ruin. Meanwhile, we have recovered our legs for a week or two. Constable will, I think, come in to the Register. He is most anxious to maintain the printing-office ; he sees most truly that the more we print the less we publish ; and for the same reason he will, I think, help us off with our heavy quire-stock.

I was aware of the distinction between the *state* and the *calendar* as to the latter including the printing-office bills, and I summed and docked them (they are marked with red ink), but there is still a difference of £2000 and upwards on the calendar against the business. I sometimes fear that, between the long dates of your bills, and the tardy settlements of the Edinburgh trade, some difficulties will occur even in June ; and July I always regard with deep anxiety. As for loss, if I get out without public exposure, I shall not greatly regard the rest. Radcliffe the physician said, when he lost £2000 on the South-Sea scheme, it was only going up 2000 pairs of stairs ; I say, it is only writing 2000 couplets, and the account is balanced. More of this hereafter. Yours truly,

W. SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

EDINR., 21st May [1813]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—Your letter (always most well-come) was doubly so as it promises the pleasure of seeing you so soon. Any day after the 12th July you may rely

¹ For complete version of this letter see vol. i, Appendix, p. 424.

on my meeting you at Longtown and proceeding a day or two with you in any direction.¹ I presume you go over Stanemore in which [case] Mrs. Scott and I will probably go as far as Greta-bridge to visit my friends the Morritts at Rokeby. My cortege will in that case be rather patriarchal as I shall probably have my boy and girl with me but this will be no great inconvenience as they can get beds in the town at Longtown and at Penrith (which I fancy will be your next day's journey) there is a very large inn. You travel I presume with your own cavalry as usual. Should you keep the west road by Kendal I will go so far as that town and so to Keswick and see Southey. Till the 12th July I am necessarily detained by attendance on the Court here for although we can play truant sometimes the ill-health of the wife of one of my colleagues has carried him to Harrogate this season and there cannot above one of us be absent at a time without the risk of stopping the business of the Court. I have enquired after the parcel & Ballantyne has informed the Mail Coach people in whose books it was regularly entered as forwarded from Edinburgh that if it does not appear he will hold them responsible. I will bring Thomsons painting with me for fear of accidents which I think happen more frequently between Edinburgh & Ireland than anywhere else. The fact is the coach-people are abominably careless. The reviews [?] & Rokeby go this day.

I like Lord Abercorn's plan of all things in the world.

¹ "We want you to meet us at Long Town," Lady A. wrote on the 11th May; "the Inn is good and the place quiet. Dumfries is not half so comfortable to stop long at and you might come on a day or two of our journey with us. I shall be very anxious to hear that you agree to this proposal. . . . God bless you my dearest friend. I feel most impatient to see you once more." Lockhart (chap. xxvi.) describes the meeting—"the ladies of the family and the household occupied four or five carriages, all drawn by the Marquis's own horses, while the noble Lord himself brought up the rear, mounted on horseback, and decorated with the ribbon of the order of the Garter"—and the trouble that had been taken at the inn to arrange everything "as nearly as possible in the style usual in his own lordly mansions."

It is a sort of *muddling*¹ work which would amuse me very much and I am convinced I could divest the cases so much of technicality that it would form a most entertaining book. Of course it would only comprehend Scottish causes for knowing nothing of English law I would make a foolish figure on that ground. There is one great objection however to this undertaking and that is—that the collection would hardly be complete without the Douglas cause. But this revival would be accompanied with unpleasant feelings to the present family with whom I have always lived on particular intimacy. Indeed I do not anywhere know [a more] clever and pleasant a companion as Lady D.,² and you know besides she is an aunt of the Duke of Buccleuch and her daughter is married on an uncle of my neighbour and kinsman Scott of Gala—so I would do nothing to displease or rather to hurt their feelings for the universe. If the Marquis thinks this chapter can be skipt over I will be most anxious to set my researches on foot. The half barbarous state of Scotland until 1748 gave rise to deeds and incidents of the most wild mysterious and original character and even in my own time I have known professionally some cases of a most singular description. I am half tempted to abridge the circumstances of one which occurred during the last sitting of our courts and is still in dependence.

About the middle of the last century a Scotch gentleman of landed property by name Carruthers of Dormont married a sister of the family of Monm[ou]th an aunt of the late Duchess of Gordon. The ladies of this family were not famed for circumspection and this dame went astray. The husband obtained a Sentence of divorce against her ; but before the proceedings could be finished

¹ Dr. Johnson's adjective. Lady Abercorn had told Scott : " Lord Abercorn says you could make a most entertaining work similar to the causes celebres. I wish you would. I think that work might be very much improved." *Causes Célèbres et Intéressantes, avec les jugemens qui les ont décidées. Recueillies par Gayot de Pitaval.* 22 tom. en 11. 12mo. La Haye, 1747, etc. *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 35. See above, pp. 256-57.

² Frances, Lady Douglas.

she was delivered of a daughter, which Law fixed upon Dormont as a legitimate child heir to his estate by former settlements although he had every possible reason to believe that the infant was an alien to his blood. He refused to see the child and as he was obliged to maintain it he resolved it should be in such a manner that the girl when she grew up should never either know her rights or have an opportunity of vindicating them. She was shifted from one obscure place of concealment to another (removals which afterwards could only be traced by the affection of her nurse who had traced the poor infant through all the places of abode out of pure affection) and at length when about five years old she was sent to reside with an ignorant and low farmer amid the wildest part of the Cheviot Hills with positive instructions that the girl should receive no other education than should enable her to read the bible and that she should be bred in the most humble manner. Still however dressed and educated as a peasant wench the girl showed some spirit and sense above her fortune. She spurned (one of the witnesses says) at the name of Robson which they endeavoured to fix upon her and as her guardian was talkative in his cups (a predicament in which like most Cheviot farmers he was frequently placed) she learned by degrees more of the mystery of her birth than Dormont designed she should ever know. Being a pretty girl she did not want admirers, nay as she disdained all of utterly low degree the son of a neighbouring petty squire called Routledge ran away with and married her. His father's estate was very small and burthened with debt—the young couple were not economists and distresses came thick upon them. They had recourse to her legal father as he may be called and stated their claims to a share of his estate while alive and to inherit it at his death, but being miserably embarrassed were at length glad to sell their rights for about £1200 which was received and spent. Calamity came still more heavy at length the

husband died a prisoner in Carlisle jail the wife, who had been the victim of ill fortune from her birth, soon followed him to the grave and a boy and girl who survived became the objects of the charity of a distant relation. The boy (who was so young when his mother died as to have no knowledge whatever of the peculiar circumstances under which he was born) was fitted out for the East Indies. Before he went on board his benefactor put into his hands a packet and desired him to take charge of it. It referred he said to some claims of his mother on a Scotch estate and might one day be useful to him should he return from India an independent man. The youth left the papers with some others in the hands of a friend in London and went to follow his fortune. It seemed that the ill planet which haunted his mother had exhausted its influence for Henry Routledge was prosperous and obtained an honourable situation in the Company's service ; and in process of time obtained leave to return to Britain. He visited Cumberland his native county and was induced from the love of grouse-shooting to extend his tour to Dumfriesshire. An extraordinary chance led him to chuse his residence at a petty inn near the very estate of Dormont now possessed by a grand-nephew of the old laird. The name of the stranger (after he had been a guest for a day or two) struck the landlady who like most of her class was a sort of record of the ancient and modern gossip of the parish where it may be thought so odd a history as that of Routledge's mother was well-known for her claim had been made public at the time when old Dormont compounded with her and her husband. This chattering old Dame did not fail to engage Mr. Routledge in discourse about his family history of which she found with great surprise he was totally ignorant. The lights she gave him on his mother's melancholy history recalled to his recollection the packet given him by his benefactor who was now dead. When he returned to London he caused the papers it contained

to be laid before English Counsel who of course could only advise him to consult lawyers here. He left directions to do so and to commence law proceedings if necessary—The late President Blair (then Solicitor-General for Scotland) advised a lawsuit on the ground that Mrs. Routledge and her husband in compounding their own right could not transact away that of their son—When Mr. Routledge returned a second time from India he was greeted with the joyful intelligence that the first decision of the cause was favourable—He gave a dinner to some of his friends and to his counsel and—I am sorry to add the catastrophe—was found dead in his bed next morning having broken a blood-vessel during the night—So ended this strange eventful history but so ended not the lawsuit which is still maintained against the Carruthers in possession in the right of the deceased Routledge's sister Mrs. Majendie wife of the Bishop of Bristol (as I think).¹ I have just this instant a note from Ballantyne to say that the Mail Coach office refused to take the books by Port Patrick unless someone was named to take charge of their being forwarded there & that having no correspondent in that village he had sent the parcel to care of a bookseller in Liverpool. He will write to his [agent] to learn why it has not been forwarded.

My *cause célèbre* has occupied so much room that I have none to enlarge upon the present marriage-law of England and Scotland. Being quite opposite to each other the one acknowledging as legal a marriage which the other annuls it clearly follows that a man may have

¹ "The decision favourable to Mr. Routledge was given in February 1811, but the ultimate decision of the case was unfavourable. Upon Mr. Routledge's death, his sister, Mrs. Majendie, wife of the Bishop of Bangor (not Bristol), took his place as pursuer of the action; and in May 1812 the First Division of the Court of Session by a majority of 4 to 3 held that the compromise of 1759, by which Mr. and Mrs. Routledge accepted £650 (not £1200) from Mr. Carruthers in full satisfaction of their claims, was binding upon their heirs. This judgment was affirmed by the House of Lords in 1820, after a reference to the Court of Session for the opinion of the whole judges. See Reports in *Faculty Collection*; also 4 Dow 392, and 2 Bligh 692."—*F.L.* Dormont is in the parish of Dalton, Dumfriesshire.

a lawful wife in each country at one and the same time and also a lawful family by each wife and this with perfect impunity because as neither country will acknowledge the marriage made in the other as existing a trial for bigamy is out of the question. It is a comfortable circumstance in such an arrangement that the two wives if they wish to retain their credit must live in different countries for she who crosses the Tweed loses her character.—It would require much more room than I have left to say how much I am your Ladyship's most obliged and faithful humble servant,

W. S.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE¹

MY DEAR SIR,—I have too long delayd to thank you for your most kind acceptable present of your three volumes. Now am I doubly arm'd since I have a set for my cabbın at Abbotsford as well as in town. And to

¹ Scott is replying to an interesting letter from Crabbe (*Walpole Collection*, vi. 39) of 5th March from Muston, near Grantham, in which he speaks of *Rokeby*, of his own sensitiveness to criticism, of *Horace in London*, of *The Rejected Addresses* "where you & I & Mr Southey & I know not who shine in the eye of the Public & Wordsworth whom I read & laughed at till I caught a touch of his disease & now really like many of the simplicities—there is one story if story it may be called that Shape or Limb, Beginning or End has none 'the antient manner or poets' Reverie' written by a Friend Mr. Lambe? and the reason for my pointing it out to your notice if perchance you have not dwelt on its singularities is this, that it does not describe Madness by its Effects but by Imitation, as if a painter to give a picture of Lunacy should make his Canvass crazy, and fill it with wild unconnected Limbs & Distortion of features—yet one or two of the Limbs are pretty." He goes on to tell how a Mr. Valpy has offered him "12 Nos of six Shilling Journals containing critical & oriental Learning & making £3 - 12 for so many of my Books. This Case (quite new to me) I can happily refer to Mr Hatchard intimating however my intire wishes to gratify a Gentleman who certainly does me honour when he values my books as his own." He tells with what pride he throws out hints of his correspondence with Scott and finally inquires about his profession: "Law is then your Profession; I mean a Profession you give your Mind and Time to, but how 'fag as Clerk?'" (See Scott's letter of January, p. 210.) "Clerk is a name for a learned person I know in our Church but how the same Hand which held the Pen of Marmion & the Lady of the Lake

say truth the auxiliary copy arrived in good time for my original copy suffers as much by its general popularity among my young people as a popular candidate from the hugs and embraces of his democratical admirers. The clearness and accuracy of your painting whether natural or moral renders I have often remarkd your poetry generally delightful to those whose youth might render them insensible to the other poetical beauties with which they abound. There are a sort of pictures (surely the most valuable were it but for that reason) which strike the uninitiated as much as they do the connoisseur though the last alone can render reasons for his admiration. Indeed our old friend Horace knew what he was saying when he chose to address his ode *Virginibus puerisque* and so did Pope when he told somebody he had the mob on the side of his Version of Homer and did not mind the High flying critics at Buttons. After all if a faultless poem could be produced I am satisfied it would tire the critics themselves and annoy the whole reading world with the spleen.

holds that of a *Clerk who fags*, unless as I expect a Clerk means something vastly more than I understand, is not to be comprehended : I wait for Elucidation." He has often thought that he "should love to read *Reports* that is brief Histories of extraordinary Cases with the Judgements. . . . The Review I intended to speak of is the Scotch Review late the Edinburgh Quarterly & is arrived at No 7. It appears to be done by young Men who have not much sense of Decorum . . . when I had published my three early Productions & began to be here & there spoken of I was one night hemmed in at a Corner seat at the Chapter Coffee house where reading People assembled and then I heard some *Clerks* discussing the merits of the Verses & the Fortunes of the Man : I sat not upon thorns—upon nails & spikes dipp'd in Aqua fortis, burned & pained in every part & alike hurt by Good & Evil & so young was I that I could not say "let me pass" for I dare[d] not trust my voice & all my comfort was that no one chanced to come in who knew me, which at that time was not unlikely : this unqualified Racking lasted about 12 or 15 minutes & has not been forgotten, nay may be one cause of too much feeling now & yet (such Contradiction is in human Nature & there only) I write, I mean publish, not for Repetition but profit & to you I confess this unreservedly : Had I not been somewhat straitened in sending my young Men to Cambridge I had been a quiet Reader all my Days, now indeed, the Road being entered & the way possible I treat as happy in this to have found you in my Journey God preserve you my dear Sir and yours."

You must be delightfully situated in the Vale of Belvoir¹ a part of England for which I entertain a special favour for the sake of the gallant hero Robin Hood who (as probably you will readily guess) is no small favourite of mine, his indistinct ideas concerning the doctrine of meum and tuum being no great objection to an outridng Borderer. I am happy to think that it is under the protection of the Rutland family of whom fame speaks highly. Our lord of the "cairn and the scaur" waste wilderness and hundred hills for many a league around is the Duke of Buccleuch the head of my clan a kind and benevolent landlord a warm and zealous friend and the husband of a lady comme il y en a peu. They are both great admirers of Mr. Crabbes poetry and would be happy to know him should he ever come to Scotland and venture into the Gothic halls of a Border Chief. The early and uniform kindness of this family with the friendship of the late and present Lord Melville enabled me some years ago to exchange my labour as a barrister for the lucrative and respectable situation of one of the Clerks of our Supreme court which only requires attendance on the court when sitting and a certain routine of official duty neither laborious nor requiring any exertion of the mind. So that my time is entirely at my own command unless when I am attending the Court which seldom occupies more than two hours of the morning during sitting. I besides hold in Commendam the Sherifffdom of Ettricke-forest (which is now no forest) so that I am a sort of pluralist as to law appointments and have as Dogberry says two gowns and every thing handsome about me. I have often thought it is the most fortunate thing for bards like you and me to have an established profession

¹ In 1783-84 Crabbe took up residence in Belvoir Castle as domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. He then went to Suffolk (1792-1805), where he wished to continue his clerical duties for a longer period, but his bishop ordered him to return to Muston in the Vale of Belvoir, where he remained till 1814.

and professional character to render us independent of those worthy gentlemen the retailers or as some have call'd them the midwives of literature whose shops are so litterd with the abortions they bring into the world that they are scarcely able to bestow the proper [care] upon young and flourishing babies like ours. That however is only a mercantile way of looking at the matter but did any of my sons show poetical talent of which (to my great satisfaction) there are no appearances the first thing I should [do] would be to inculcate upon [him] the duty of cultivating some honourable profession and qualifying himself to play a more respectable part in Society than the mere poet. And as the best corollary of my doctrine I would make him get the tale of the patron¹ by heart from beginning to end. It is curious enough that you [should] have republisht the Village for the purpose of sending your young men to College and I should have written the Lay of the Last Minstrel for the purpose [of] buying a new horse for the volunteer cavalry. I wonder what were the ruling motives of such formidable heroics as Mr. Valpy in comparaisou of whose heavy artillery we are but the Cossacks or Highlanders of literature. He must be a precious impudent dog by the specimen which he affords you of his talents for exchange. Brass for gold has been out of fashion since the days of the Trojan war & even Aladdin who exchanged new lamps against old one[s] would have hesitated to barter the luminary of the Belvoir bard against the kitchen candlestickes and farthing candles of Dr. Valpy.

As for the reviewers sleep they in peace for me though these must have been desperate rogues who assumed the terrible title of the Edinr Quarterly combining the horrors of the very Gog & Magog of criticism. I have a notion however an afflicted poet might answer them as the Dæmon of yore replied to the unauthorized exorcist. Paul I know & Apollos I know but who are ye?—

¹ i.e., of course, "The Patron," one of the poems in Crabbe's *Tales* (1812).

I must now send this scrawl into town to get a frank for god knows it is not worthy of postage. With the warmest wishes for your health prosperity and increase of fame (though it needs not) I remain most sincerely and affectionately Yours
[Signature cut out]

ABBOTSFORD, 1 June [1813]

[*Nat. Lib. Scot.*]

[To THE REV. ROBERT MOREHEAD]

To the Author of Poetical Epistles and Translations.

Care of Messrs. Ramsay and Co.,
Printers, Edinr.

I SHOULD not have suffered your card to remain [so] long unanswered if I had thought that I could offer you any criticisms upon your interesting poems. But I am not a great friend either to giving or receiving advice of this nature. A friendly critic may no doubt sometimes be of service to an author, but I think very rarely. It once happened to me when less hackneyed in composition to shew a small poem to about a dozen persons whom I considered as having taste and judgment. They all honored my attempt with general approbation, but favoured me at the same time with so many special objections that not a line of the poem escaped unblotted excepting two which were neither good nor bad but essentially necessary to carry on the story. As my good friends, however, did not in general agree upon their objections, I took the liberty of dissenting from them all. And from that time I have never sought or given any criticism, except from two persons whose minds are very much in the same cast of feeling with my own. I trust, Sir, that you will hold this as an apology for my declining to offer any particular remarks on a poem to which I can so safely and conscientiously give my sincere approbation. There is one couplet in your Epistle which I suppose I have quoted a hundred times, as it

describes exactly the distant view of Eildon and Melrose from the upper part of my little farm.¹ I meant to have said all this a long while since but have been prevented by a variety of trifling business. I wish you, Sir, all health to follow your literary amusements and should be happy at any [time] to shew myself Your obliged Servt.

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR., 1 *June* 1813

[*Lockhart Letters*]

TO MRS. MACLEAN CLEPHANE OF TORLOISK FAVOURED BY
MR. PATERSON

EDINBURGH *June* 10 1813

MY DEAR MRS. CLEPHANE,—The bearer is a young person (Mr. Paterson by name) bred to the Church and ambitious of poetical distinction. He composed and submitted to my inspection some time since a Hebridean tale which had great poetical merit and beauty of language, but was totally inaccurate as to costume, landscape and so forth.² I pointed out some of these errors to the young bard and he now informs me he intends to visit the islands this summer to rectify his ideas upon these subjects. As he seems very gentle and unaffected and is probably not very well provided with recommendations I do for him what I would not do for

¹ See note, p. 255. This letter has been copied for Lockhart in Morehead's hand.

² *The Legend of Iona, with other poems.* By Walter Paterson. Edinburgh : 1814. 8vo. In a note to stanza xvii, commenting on the description there drawn from Innermore, Mull, Paterson adds : " If, by the introduction of this scene, I have added any beauty or interest to the poem, I am indebted for it to Mrs. Maclean Clephane of Torloisk, as it was by her instructions that I visited Innermore. The same accomplished lady, whose name is sacred to travellers, is also entitled to my gratitude for many other valuable advices, designed to assist me in the execution of my romances. I am here tempted, at the same time, to record my obligations to Mr. Walter Scott, as it was through his friendship that I obtained access to these distinguished advantages ; and from him that I derived courage to persevere in an undertaking, on the presumption of which I had often reflected with terror and distrust."

many i.e. make him the bearer of a letter to Torloisk. Do not bother yourself with him however more than you may find absolutely convenient, for I know little of him, but that he [is] quiet and modest, and seems possessed of real talent. He is not at all *de mes amis*.

I beg all kind loves to the young ladies. I am busy scraping my Jacobite songs together and beg contributions. The smallest donations will be thankfully accepted. Can Miss Margaret find me a song (Gaelic) having the Chorus *So ro Morag* "thus says, or sings Morag." It is a list of the clans who took arms at the famous landing in Moidart.

Once more my dear Madam, Excuse this liberty and believe me most truly and respectfully Your obt. servant

WALTER SCOTT

Do not omit to ask Mr. Paterson for a sight of his poem.

[*Northampton*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE¹

DEAR SIR,—My Grieve came to town last night and informs me it will be necessary to come to a decision on

¹ On the 18th May, as a previous letter has shown, Constable purchased a portion of John Ballantyne & Co.'s quire stock, with the exception of the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, paying £2000 for the whole; and Scott describes himself as for the first time these many weeks able to lay his head on a quiet pillow. But within a month, partly owing to John Ballantyne's incomplete statements but owing also, apparently, to Scott's having to retire bills accepted in the purchase of Abbotslee (see note, p. 296), he was in need of money again. But 1813 was a difficult year for most traders, the Banks chary of credit in view of the imminent call for a large public loan. In the spring of the year Constable had a sale in London and his lawyer, Gibson-Craig, urges him to take even smaller prices than he might hope for in order to have ready money at hand. Scott spoke or wrote to Constable about an advance on the poem to be written, and on the 16th Cadell writes to Constable a long letter on their dealings with Scott: "A certain Earl and his new Poem have caused me much ruminating and investigation notwithstanding our long walk on Monday evening," and he goes on to point out that "at this moment our engagements in Bills entirely exclusive of Bonds &c. are above the Sum of £75000. I know you will be astonished at this as I was when Mr Fife made it up, and no less so when during this year £42000 and upwards are payable . . . but placing all these foul things called bills

the matter I mentiond to you. I therefore think of going to Abbotsford on Sunday to see what I can make of it, as I have a very capricious person to deal with. I have therefore to submit our proposed transaction to you in two points of view : there is no hurry in your determining *which* you will prefer but if you should not find either the one or other acceptable I will be obliged to you to let me know as I shall then apply elsewhere.

My first proposal is that you should either take half of a new poem to be publishd before the Birthday 1814 between Longman & you at £2500—the acceptances being made immediatly discountable which is my temptation for selling any part of it. But renewable with the assistance of my credit so as to make them convenient for you. Or if you prefer taking a quarter to yourself it will be £1250 and I will deal with Longman myself. In this case the management will be with John Ballantyne as my agent

in the rear and looking at the transaction as a plain mercantile problem I am perfectly astonished at Mr S. asking nay even hinting at such an idea as our paying say six or twelve months in advance for a Poem not written perhaps scarcely thought of—in what sort of situation would Longmans and ourselves stand in if engaged to him for say £3500 as in July and to be renewed till the Poem is published that [if] Mr S. was to be summoned to the other world, and not a sheet at Press, how would we look? what would the world say to it? You will say I am a very gloomy fellow, but Mr Scott is not like his Poems immortal. . . . The Bs it was said advanced for the Lady of the Lake and Rokeby but they could not refuse and must either do that or go to p-t—Mr S. has cheated us in Swift, humbugged us in Rokeby, &c and will continue to do so the greater halo he gets to creep in at—I do not take him into the range of a common author but do Mr Stewart Mr Playfair or any one else ask bills on the strength of a new Essay? . . . I think that £5000 is too much for his proposed poem, he wishes to squeeze us as he has done the B's they thought Rokeby was to perform wonders in their finances but the cream has gone to Mr S. and what is left to them is very thin. I am of opinion we should in the most genteel manner say that we could not make an offer for the Poem till further progress is made in it—we will be most happy to treat on the most liberal terms but our other great engagements are so heavy we cannot increase them at this moment. As to his Register we have already got bit with it and I think to receive it in a present would only put us in a disagreeable situation.” Constable then wrote to Scott on the 19th a letter not now traced, which was crossed by the above letter from Scott which reached Constable on the afternoon of the 21st when he was in the middle of a letter to Cadell : “ 7 Oclock Evg. I had written the above before dinner

for the remaining moiety but we will be guided by your better experience as to quantity of editions etc etc etc, & conduct of the work.

My second alternative is that you should purchase the whole poem at the price of £5000 understanding that Longmans house are to have the offer of one half or one fourth. And in this case £2500 as above is to be accepted for immediatly between Longman & you in bills at discountable dates £1500 to be accepted for when the Manuscript goes to press and £1000 when ten thousand Copies are sold. But if you should prefer this last bargain you must also take off my hands my remaining registers at the same price with the former accepting for them at Christmas after deducing book-accompt & at any length of date you think proper. And I will frankly own that it is only the desire of being quit of these Registers that would induce me to part with the whole poem on any terms. For I know by experience how much better it is

and have now to acknowledge yours of Saturday and enclosures per Mail—and mention the receipt of a letter from Mr Scott which rather perplexes me. It is a long one of three pages—which I must read oftener than once before sending it to you and there is not time to copy it before the post office at the Bridge of Earn shuts up—you may expect the original tomorrow, in the meantime I may state that my letter of yesterday will do no harm and is no bar in the way to a suitable reply to the present—He makes 2 distinct propositions and adds that in the event of neither being accepted he must apply to Longman and Co. and Murray. I am not sure but Walter Scott's letter may bring me home this week." Cadell acknowledges this in an undated letter welcoming "an open candid proposal from Sir Walter" in place of hints about the Register, Poems, &c. Scott's next letter is, I think, a reply to Constable's "my letter of yesterday" which Scott calls "your letter of the 19th." One or other may have slipped as to the actual date. The property for which Scott was thus willing to add to his embarrassments is described by Lockhart, who also indicates other extravagances which are explained by a note from one Thos. Winstanley on 9th July with an invoice of armour and other bric-à-brac costing in all £65 7s. od. What Scott wanted he must have at once, whether a wife, a property, or an antiquity. It is true that his success never made him vain or other than generous, but it is not true that it did not affect his mind in other ways. A little more literary vanity might have been better than such unlimited social ambitions. But the correspondence does not bear out the rather ill-conditioned letter of Cadell, which he did not show, to Lockhart later. Scott's proposals are all quite above board and Constable was free to accept or reject as he thought best. See also vol. i, Appendix, p. 424.

to keep copy rights than to sell them but I am not unwilling to give up some advantage to be rid of these books & the trouble attending them.

If either of these proposals (subject to such modifications as without altering them essentially may make them more convenient for you which I would willingly agree to) happen to suit you I would propose to give you the trouble of coming so far as the Hawes on Friday or Saturday next when I will meet you and finish the business over a beefsteak at four o'clock. But if upon consideration you do not think either proposal likely to answer your views I will then try London & between Longman & Murray have no doubt of getting my money : so in that case I beg you will let me know your determination by post—And if you do not wish to decide hastily upon taking the whole with the Register or a quarter without it we can arrange the necessary acceptances which will be the same in both cases & you can take your own time to consider and advise with your London Correspondents which alternative you will prefer as it will be time enough to settle that matter. I assure you my good friend I shall be glad if you find you can settle this matter to your own contentment & advantage. Meanwhile requesting the favor of a line from you I am
Dear Sir Your obedt Servant

WALTER SCOTT

Sunday 20 June [1813] EDINR.

I should wish to claim your obliging promise to put forward the Swift acceptances—If we could settle these & £1000 before I go South the remaining £1500 might remain till you had communicated with Longman in the beginning of the month.

Mr. Constable Bookseller

Pitcaithley Well By Bridge of Earn

[*Stevenson*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter of the 19 only this day. I wrote you fully on Sunday upon my wishes & views & I think from your very sensible observations we may lay aside any thought of selling the Register at present—Of course I will keep one half of the intended poem but I shall be ready to go hand in hand for the interest of all parties to prevent underselling in the market or injudicious rivalry among the partners. I consider the price as moderate (all things considered) at £2500 for the half—It is considerably less than I have made on the share of Rokeby sold to yourself & surely that is no unfair measurement. Besides you owe me £100 or something like it on that bargain for I never intended to part with that share under £800—But I have no objection to let £500 be dependent on the ultimate success of the poem—say the sale of 10,000—in the mean time I must have the money that is the credit for it; because I don't care a farthing whether the bargain goes on or off except for gratifying my wish in the matter I mentiond.¹ To allow a larger share than £500 on the half or £1000 on the whole to be contingent on success would be making myself a partner of loss but not a partner of profit which by no means suits my ideas of equity or my inclination. If you think the half too great an adventure I will be very glad to restrict your purchase to a quarter & deal with Longmans House myself. I only offer doing it through you because you might wish to have that matter under your management. If you decline the engagement I shall propose it to Longman failing whom to our friend John Murray or perhaps Cadell and Davies who have expressd some anxiety to renew our very old connection—I have thought this matter over & over and cannot depart from the conclusion I have formd. But I shall be far from

¹ The purchase of land, and so at beginning of next letter “the object which I proposed.”

being displeased with you for entertaining a different opinion. I would only wish to avoid the pain of a personal meeting where nothing might be concluded & to secure at the same time leisure to look about me in London so that your answer to my former letter & this will square my proceedings. If you see grounds for a settlement on either, subordinate considerations may be easily arranged—if not I shall be sorry but not disposed to alter my opinion. But if we agree on our ideas respecting the half of the poem which I think of calling “The Nameless Glen”¹ we can then keep any future discussion open as to the remaining moiety if after holding a College as you call it we should agree upon any mode of relieving me of the Register. And if not we are where we were.—I think John Ballantyne might manage the Register very well though he is perhaps rather too hasty in his movements—I ought perhaps to add that certainly I will part with no part of the property I retain without giving you & Longman the first offer. I have no doubt of friendly usage at your hands & Longmans & indeed never met with indifferent usage from any of the trade perhaps because I always gave them the best commodity I could & I think have rarely disappointed them. I am glad you & Mrs. C. find advantage from the Springs at Pitcaithley & the relaxation from labour & am Very truly Your obedt. Serv

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 21 *June* 1813

Mr. Constable

Pitcaithley House By Bridge of Earn

[*Stevenson*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I got your letter today just as I thought of writing to you that I feared I should not be able to attain

¹ A provisional title for the poem afterwards named *The Lord of the Isles*.

the object which I proposed by the transaction we had under our thoughts. At any rate you are quite right in the present times not to pledge yourself deeper than you find quite convenient. So it is unnecessary to talk more about this business just now. As for Swift there is a large portion of the last i.e. the first volume ready to go to press instantly & it can be continued regularly till the work is out & I only waited your determination about the printer. I will call tomorrow to show you the Memoir of Leyden¹ & only dropd you this note to save other explanations. Yours truly

W SCOTT

25 June 1813

[Stevenson]

TO ALLAN CUNNINGHAM²

SIR,—I was favoured some days since with your letter and the volume of Scottish Songs by which they are accompanied. They display in my opinion a great deal both of the language and feeling of poetry, and I regret

¹ This little biography of Leyden was first printed in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1811, which was now (1813) in preparation apparently under Constable's direction.

² Allan Cunningham (1784-1842), miscellaneous writer, at an early age began writing poetry. When in 1809 R. H. Cromek travelled in Scotland to collect songs he came across Cunningham's poems and thought little of them. Cunningham then disguised them as old songs and Cromek came to admire them and readily accepted them. As a result Cromek persuaded the poet to try a literary life in London, whither Cunningham went on 9th April 1810. The following year appeared his *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song*, which was favourably received, but, with the exception of Scott and Hogg, mystified the public as to the origin of the ballads. In 1813 he published *Songs, chiefly in the rural dialect of Scotland*, the work mentioned at the beginning of this letter. For a time he acted as Francis Chantrey's secretary, and became acquainted with Scott when the novelist was sitting to Chantrey. He submitted a drama called *Sir Marmaduke Maxwell* to Scott, who thought it unsuitable for the stage, though he praised its poetry. "He pays it a compliment in the preface to the *Fortunes of Nigel*." In 1825 appeared four volumes of *The Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern*. It includes "A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea," which, written by a landsman, is one of our best sea songs. Shortly before his death Carlyle met him in London and admired him. He was generally known as "honest Allan Cunningham."—*D.N.B.*

truly to observe that they are published for the author, which I fear you will not find the most profitable mode of publishing. I hope I shall not be considered as intruding when I request to be considered as a subscriber for six copies which I will endeavour to bestow among such friends as may be more able than myself to give your work the encouragement which it deserves. If this should be agreeable to you, and especially if it is attended with some little advantage, will you let me know how I can settle the amount of my little commission, and I will send you a note how to distribute the books.— I beg you will not mention this trifling subject to any one for there is nothing I dread so much as being supposed to give myself the airs of literary patronage. My secluded life and limited fortune make it impossible for me to support such a character to advantage and among the very many applications which are made to me from a mistaken estimate of both,—there seldom occur any which like that of Mr. Allan Cunningham makes me regret my limited means of assisting the literary efforts of others. I remain Sir with thanks for the real pleasure your book has afforded me Your obedient Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 25 *June* 1813

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

[NOTE. On the Abbotsford copy of this letter is a note by Allan Cunningham: "The following letter was written to me in consequence of my sending Sir Walter a small book of songs—printed but never published—some of my best verses were in it and some of my worst, for I had not then learnt the art of separating the chaff from the corn and I am not sure that I have mastered the secret yet. I had no letter from the same hand till 1820, and I had seen Sir Walter in the meantime."]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I fear our match has misssd fire and Triermain will not be reviewd but what the reason may be for this alteration I cannot learn without making enquiries which would not be prudent. It is said that

Jeffery the scourge of authors is about to pay a visit to America almost immediatly—the reason of this *move* is variously assigned—but the public always willing to put the worst construction upon such matters spread a whisper about a claim made upon his unwilling hand by some fair nymph whose pretensions he is willing to parry. This however I dont believe a word of and cannot see what good changing his climate would do him in the case supposed. He has some connections in America and I fancy is willing to take the opportunity of the long Vacation to refresh himself in the congenial atmosphere of a republic. By the way I got a present from an American gentleman of a most admirable brace of volumes entitled *The History of New York during the Dutch Dynasty* by Diedrich Knickerbocker.¹ It is an excellent and very humorous satire much of it doubtless lost by its being local but enough remaining [to] entertain me highly. I will bring it to you if you are to be at Rokeby in the beginning of August for you must know that for the purpose of settling some business I am to meet the Marquis of Abercorn on the border in the commencement of that month and I must travel on a days journey or perhaps two in his suite. This will bring me to the foot of Stanemore and it would be difficult to turn me there if I thought Mrs. Morritt and you were on the other side. I should like to know how this will suit with your motions

In consequence of the success of Rokeby and some other favourable circumstances I am now busied with clearing off all old scores and scraping together my little property for the benefit of the brats and by Christmas I have every reason to hope that I shall find myself a free man of the forest with some thousand pounds in my pocket besides my house and the farm of Abbotsford. But in this cursed times I cannot as formerly get cash for my booksellers bills which used to be as current as bank notes. The last due for Rokeby £650 has still six months to run

¹ See above, letter to Brevoort and note, p. 259.

and it would be extremely convenient for me if you could without interfering with your own affairs prevail on your Banker to take this long leggd fellow for me in the same way he did the last, which I trust the Ballantynes regularly retired with Interest on the advance. This will certainly be my last transaction of the kind for should I write again I will rather keep the copy right than subject myself to these inconveniences. Indeed I was partly aware it would have been better to do so with Rokeby but I wishd to buy Abbotsford and settle myself where I could spit into the Tweed without which I think I could hardly have been quite happy any where. If this should be inconvenient for you do not think that a word has been written about it : if it should happen to be otherwise it will be a material accommodation to me in paying off some demands upon me at present. As I am now in full possession of my income as Clerk of Session I can have little chance of getting behind. Above all let me know if I shall find you at Rokeby when I part with the great Marquis of Carrabas (Abercorn I would say).¹ I should tell you how well the wild flowers from Thorsgill are

¹ Morritt replied on the 29th welcoming the chance of seeing him "as soon as you are disengaged from the train of the Great Abercorn comet that draws you along in its perihelion." Owing to his having himself overdrawn his account to pay certain legacies it is *not* as easy as it was last year to cash Scott's bill but he will propose it to his banker, Hoare, who "will of course charge you interest and discount." It would be easier if Scott could wait till August. He has returned from London "richer in Quackery than I ever remember it. We had the Edgeworths shewing off & shewn off till all the world was tired. Now Mad. Stael has arrived. . . . Miss Edgeworth we know has great talents & may have many sociable & amiable qualities but much as I wd. like to have become acquainted with her the thing was impossible without taking her papa into the bargain. Now of all the brood of philosophers I have yet seen there is hardly one down to Thelwall & Dr Busby whom it seems to me more impossible to tolerate," and he goes on to describe the great man's loquacity. Joanna Baillie, on the other hand, is "a delightful person, and I hope she thinks me the same." "I introduced myself in your name, was graciously received, and we swore an eternal friendship." Joanna's modesty had shone by contrast with the vanity of Dr Parr and Lord Erskine . . . "who each puffed the other in alternate compliments." . . . Byron has published a new poem dedicated to Rogers : "He calls it the *Giaour* a word that has sadly plagued the *bas bleus*."

flourishing at Abbotsford how the currant bushes (wild videlicet) are sprouting out on the Abbotswell all which I hope Mrs. Morritt and you will come to see one day or other : begging my kind Compts with all apology for a scrawl written to the tune of a pleading which goes very deeply to injure the character of Ossian Macpherson. Ever Yours truly,

W SCOTT

EDINR. 25 *June* 1813

[*Law*]

TO DANIEL TERRY¹

EDINR 2d *July*, 1813

I DO not delay my dear Terry to say my gratulor on the subject of your letter—it gives me the highest pleasure to see you placed upon the first rank of your profession without intrigue or solicitation & under circumstances so highly creditable—with labour & prudence the world is now fair before you : it is the interest of the managers to bring you forward & from the nature of your engagement you are secure from all drudgery but that which is honourable. The quantum of the salary is for the present of less consequence : it is sufficient for genteel independance & wealth will come hereafter. Besides you have come in triumphant on your own terms & it would have been [a] pity to risque such a consummation for the odd pounds shillings & pence. On the whole it is a most handsome transaction flattering to you & creditable to the managers & will I am sure be advantageous to both parties. Mrs. Scott desires her compliments of congratulation on the occasion. We shall miss you of a

¹ Terry had written from Perth on 30th June announcing his definite engagement with the Covent Garden proprietors. Mr Fawcett has asked : "What are the parts I feel myself most at home in & what I shd. like to open in—I still feel strongly inclined to adhere by the character which you were kind enough to suggest, Malvolio &c." Terry's being at Perth explains the next letter to Tom, whose regiment was stationed there this year.

Sunday but must console ourselves with the recollection that you are doing far better for yourself than you could here. As you are in Perth I wish you would call on my brother Tom—he is paymaster to the Regiment quartered there & you will be much pleased with him. On consideration I add a slip of introduction to this letter : he is a great connoisseur in the ancient drama.

I have written to Mr. Winstanley about the armour.¹ My bargain with Constable was otherwise arranged but our friend Little John is to find the needful articles & I shall take care of Mr. Winstanleys interest who has behaved too handsomely in this matter to be trusted to the mercy of our little friend the Picaroon² who is notwithstanding his many excellent qualities a little on the score of old Gobbo—doth somewhat smack—somewhat grow to. Much obliged for your kind intermediation. As for your first start in town I think it must be Malvolio—it has been little noticed though a prominent part in the interesting drama to which it belongs—so no one can draw odious comparisons & it is the chief business of professors of the fine arts to get out of the way of those cursed charges of imitation, & no less cursed comparisons. The public opinion like a beleagured garrison is often carried by surprise on some point where experience has not led them to expect an attack. I wish you could add Sir Adam Contest³ in the same evening : it is a character in which future performers will for ever deprecate a

¹ Lockhart declares that Scott added to the financial troubles of this year by a further purchase of land, up to the Loch of Cauldshiels. I think this must be a mistake, as after the purchase of Abbotslee in 1812 for £4200 Scott made no further purchase till 1816, when he bought Kaeside. What happened was probably that he had to meet bills issued for the purchase of Abbotslee. He was also buying a lot of ancient armour advertised by Mr. Winstanley, a celebrated auctioneer in London.

² A name given by Scott to John Ballantyne, of whose honesty Scott is as uncertain as Launcelot Gobbo : "Well, my conscience, . . . says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's son ; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste."—*Merchant of Venice*, II. 2.

³ Character in Mrs. Inchbald's play, *The Wedding Day* (1790).

comparison with your honour. Of all this I hope we shall talk together soon. Our motions are—we go to Abbotsford on the 12th & about a fortnight after to Drumlanrig & perhaps a little way into England which will detain us from home about a fortnight or better. Either before or after this little tour we hope to see you at Abbotsford. I am fitting up a small room above Peters house where an unceremonious bachelor may consent to do penance, though the place is a cock loft & the access that which leads many a bold fellow to his last nap—a ladder.¹ After our return will suit us as well because we shall be then settled & the shooting season approaching. Believe me yours with most sincere good will

W. SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies and Lockhart*]

TO THOMAS SCOTT

[*Enclosed with letter to Daniel Terry*]

[2nd July 1813]

DEAR TOM,—I have begg'd my friend Mr. Terry of the Theatre to call upon you, 1st because I desire to have exact news of your family & welfare, 2dly because you will like Mr. Terry who is an excellent student of the old Drama : 3dly because he will like you for the same reason, 4thly & to conclude because I wish you to know each other. Yours with best love to Mrs. Scott & most affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ "The court of offices, built on the *haugh* at Abbotsford in 1812, included a house for the faithful coachman, Peter Mathieson. One of Scott's Cantabrigian friends, Mr. W. S. Rose, gave the whole pile soon afterwards the name, which it retained to the end, of *Peter-House*. The loft at Peter-House continued to be occupied by occasional bachelor guests until the existing mansion was completed."—LOCKHART.

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I delayd answering your favour thinking I could have overtaken the *Demonology* for the Review but I had no books in the Country where it found me and since that Swift who is now nearly finishd has kept me incessantly labouring. When that is off my hand I will have plenty of leisure for reviewing though you really have no need of my assistance. The X volume of Somers being now out of my hands I take the liberty to draw of this date as usual for £105. Now I have a favour to ask which I do with the more confidence because if it is convenient & agreeable to you to oblige me in the matter it will be the means of putting our connection as author & publisher upon its former footing which I trust will not be disagreeable to you. I am making up a large sum of money to pay for a late purchase and as part of my funds is secured on an heritable bond which cannot be exacted till Martinmas I find myself some hundreds short which the circumstances of the money market here renders it not so easy to supply as formerly. Now if you will oblige me by giving me a lift with your credit and accepting the inclosed bills¹ it will accomodate me particularly at this moment and as I shall have ample means of putting you in cash to replace them as they fall due will not I should hope occasion you any inconvenience. Longmans house on a former occasion obliged me in this way and I hope found their account in it. But I intreat you will not stand on the least ceremony should you think you could not oblige me without inconveniencing yourself. The property I have purchased cost about £5000 so it is no wonder I am a little out for the moment. Will you have the goodness to return an answer in course of post as failing your benevolent aid I must look about elsewhere.

¹ "Three bills for £300 each at three, four, and six months respectively"—SMILES.

You will understand distinctly that I do not propose that you should advance any part of the money by way of loan or otherwise but only the assistance of your credit the bills being to be returned by cash remitted by me before they fall due. Believe me your obedt. servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 5th July 1813

John Murray Esq. Bookseller
Albemarle Street London

[*John Murray*]

TO MRS. CLEPHANE

EDINBURGH 11 July 1813

MY DEAR MRS. CLEPHANE,—I beg to introduce to your kind notice and hospitality two young friends, of whom both by our friend Moritt's report and from the little I have seen, I am inclined to think very well : the one is Earl Compton, son of Lord Northampton, the other Mr. Pemberton—they are well acquainted with some friends of yours.¹ Lord C. will give Margaret a book with my kind Compliments, it contains a very pretty panegyric on your father which is the chief reason for sending it. The author is Mr. Morehead,² the English Clergyman. I am, in great haste, for the gong is sounding very much. Your faithful and respectful servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Northampton*]

¹ Morritt had written to Scott : " You will very likely hear of me about the time you receive this, from Lord Compton and Mr. Pemberton, two young friends of mine, who are travelling your road, and to whom I gave a letter for you, as I wished to procure them the opportunity of seeing Edinburgh under your auspices. Lord Compton is Lord Northampton's eldest son, and Mr. Pemberton, a young Shropshire gentleman. They stayed here four or five days, and I hope will make an interesting tour."—*Walpole Collection*. This introduced Lord C. to his future wife.

² See above, p. 283.

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT

13 July 1713 [sic]¹

MANY thanks my dear Morritt for your fraternal assistance²—I am only ashamd of the trouble you have had which however your kindness makes light of I feel very deeply. Ballantyne who sends the Bill takes the liberty to add a box of his own publications as a slight acknowledgement for the advantage he had by your assistance last year for the discount by our bargain fell upon him and indeed I had not the least idea that he had not remitted it with the principal—Here we are al fresco at length enjoying the sweet air of Tweedside instead of the stifling fumes of the parliamt. House. Old Hutton the geologist *parcus et infrequens deorum cultor* used to say it was worth while going to a presbyterian kirk for the pleasure of coming out and truly I am of the same opinion as to the Court of Session—Every thing is flourishing here magnificently and some of my new planted trees actually rival an expanded umbrella in height and extent of shade.

I was fortunate enough to be in town when Lord Compton and Mr. Pemberton passd through—they appear to be very good young men. I spent part of Sunday in showing them the Abbey and other memorables and they dined and spent the day with us. I have given them a letter to Mrs. Clephane for as they are bound for Staffa and the Laird is not at Ulva it will be a point of consequence to find them some accommodation in the land of mist and billows.

Your account of Jeffreys retreat was the right reading.³

¹ This date is written in another hand.

² Hoare had refused to discount the bill, but had advanced £650 upon Morritt's hand "to repay him that sum again with Interest at 5 per cent. in 6 months."

³ Morritt had written: "I hear Jeffrey's tour to America is not to avoid, but to fetch a wife, and that she is a niece of Johnny Wilkes, bred and born in America. What a portentous conjunction of philosophic republicanism!"—*Walpole Collection*.

I remember seeing the young Lady some time ago at his house at dinner—there is I believe a family connection between the parties. Meantime the review is put into commission—John Murray Professor Playfair and some third person whom I forget (Thos. Thomson I believe) are the Commissioners—what halcyon days for poor bards and authors. I think Triermain begins to be more noticed. I hear much of it in society and nobody with us smokes the truth.

We keep our purpose of being at Rokeby in the first week of August though we are in some degree dependent on the motions of our great Marquis. My present intention is to be at Drumlanrig about the 25th where I shall see what the Duke of Buccleuch is making of his new domain and lend him some of my Gothic knowlege if he will accept it to put his castle into repair. I am told it is a grand old chateau but my own early recollections make it a very gloomy one—Will there be any chance of Hebers being in Yorkshire in August. I fear not he skips about like a flea in a blanket and no man knows where to find him. I must close my letter in a great hurry kind compliments to Mrs. Morritt in which [Mrs.] Scott joins. I will write to you [again] very soon. Ever yours faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 13 *July* 1813.

[*Law*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—Make your conscience easy about Mrs. Miller's book which I saw safely packed up and addressed for the owner in Mr. Ro: Millers own beautiful Italian hand. Here we are settled safely in the country at length thank heaven and free from the oppressive heat and clamour of the Court of Session which in summer time is really sickening. The last day we were in town two friends dined with us so particularly

introduced by Morritt that I wished to shew them extraordinary civility and as the utmost kindness in my power and what I would extend to few Southern[ers] I have given them a line of introduction to Mrs. Clephane. They are Lord Compton son of the Earl of Northampton and his companion Mr. Pemberton very pleasant young men of the right stamp in politics and with no nonsense about them at least that I could discover. Lord Compton takes charge of a book for you containing a political compliment to your grandfather Mr. Maclean of Torloisk couched in no vulgar strain of poetry. The author is Mr. Morehead of the English Chapel in Edinburgh and I think his whole original pieces are very clever though I cannot say so much for the translations—I fear I shall not have the pleasure of seeing your young Laird unless he comes to this cabbinn but I trust he will deliver the awful spell in Castle Street—it will arrive in good time for it can endanger the life of no one but a senseless old woman who keeps the house and distracts with constant and intolerable blunders. I trust we shall not miss the Stanhopes though I fear they may hit upon an unlucky interval when we propose going to Drumlanrig and from thence a little way into England—but we must hope the best.

As for my loyalty to the Stuarts fear nothing that can attain it. I never used the word Pretender which is a most unseemly word in my life unless when (God help me) I was obliged to take the oaths of Abjuration and Supremacy at elections and so forth and even then I always did it with a qualm of conscience. Seriously I am very glad I did not live in 1745 for though as a lawyer I could not have pleaded Charles's right and as a clergyman I could not have prayed for him yet as a soldier I would I am sure against the convictions of my better reason have fought for him even to the bottom of the gallows. But I am not the least afraid nowadays of making my feelings walk hand in hand with my judgement though the former are Jacobitical the latter inclined for

public weal to the present succession—You have probably heard that Jeffrey is gone to America to wed a wife and bring her home. I saw the young lady some months ago at his house. She looked pleasant and intelligent not very pretty I think. She is a grand niece of Johnnie Wilkes by birth an American—from such an union Morritt swears that the world may expect a second Brutus. I dont wonder that you were struck with Jeffrey—he is very clever and particularly powerful in conversation. As for me I believe he likes me as well as he does anyone that is not of his *clique* and we have accordingly always lived very well together and for the horse play of criticism I am of opinion with Olivia that to be generous guiltless and of a liberal disposition is to take those things for bird-bolts which others deem canon bullets—Adieu my dear young friend commend me kindly to your mother and sister and believe me your sincere and affectionate friend.

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD. MELROSE 13 *July* 1813.

[*Northampton*]

TO J. B. S. MORRITT

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I have your letter and hasten to say that we certainly will not be at Rokeby till after the 6th if our great Marquis of Carrabas¹ calls upon me sooner which is highly improbable so as to leave me a free day or two I intend to go to Keswick to see Southey and join him in lyrical execrations against Bonaparte.²

¹ *i.e.* of Abercorn. Scott always gives him this addition, which Lockhart prudently suppresses.

² Owing to constant letters of financial embarrassment from John Ballantyne at the end of July and beginning of August, Scott, having visited the Duke of Buccleuch at Drumlanrig and having intended to proceed southward, had to cut short his tour at Penrith and never reached Rokeby, though he managed to spend a day with Southey at Keswick. See letter to Hartstonge, 21st August 1813. But a letter from Morritt of 8th August shows that, owing to his wife's illness, he had to countermand the invitation. See also Scott's letter to Morritt, 10th August.

I have returnd the note to Ballantyne to get another made payable precisely on the 15 January he proposed sending it to you but I have written to him to send it either to me or to Hoare's direct & I shall hear tomorrow which he has done.—As for Lady Caroline Lambe¹ I suppose she will prove what Shakespeare calls a laced mutton² and I am fully convinced with Strap of yore that London is the Devils drawing room.³ Adieu my dear friend. I rejoice in the prospect of our meeting so soon. Ever yours truly

W. SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 20 July [1813]

[Law]

TO LADY ABERCORN

MY DEAR LADY ABERCORN,—August is now so nearly approaching that I fancy your time of departure will be nearly fixed. Mrs. Scott & I intend to pay a visit of a few days at Drumlanrig where the D. & Dss. of Buccleuch are taking possession of a large old castle late the Duke of Queensberry's. It is within a few miles of Dumfries & when I learn the Marquis's motions by a line addressed to me at Drumlanrig castle I will put myself in motion for Longtown where I propose myself

¹ Lady Caroline Lamb (1785-1828) was the only daughter of Frederick Ponsonby, third Earl of Bessborough. On 3rd June 1805 she married the Hon. William Lamb, afterwards Lord Melbourne. She became later violently infatuated with Byron. Morritt had related to Scott the incident of her attempting to stab herself at Lady Heathcot's ball when Byron had passed her with some dry remark. "I am glad that in the days of our youth this energetic mode of love-making was not the fashion."

² *Proteus*. But, dost thou hear? gavest thou my letter to Julia?

Speed. Ay, sir: I, a lost mutton, gave your letter to her, a laced mutton, and she, a laced mutton, gave me, a lost mutton, nothing for my labour.

Proteus. Here's too small a pasture for such store of muttons.—SHAKESPEARE, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. i.

A "mutton" was a loose woman.

³ "Strap lifting up his eyes and hands to heaven, prayed that God would deliver him from such scenes of iniquity; for surely the devil had set up his throne in London."—SMOLLETT, *Roderick Random*, chap. xv.

the honour of thanking you for all the kindness & all the trouble you have taken on account of your unworthy friend. I have written as handsome a letter to Baron Smith as I could devise. I defer'd doing it till I had the papers so obligingly lent by Dr. Barratt copied & could return the originals which I have done through a friend at the castle of Dublin.

Here we are at our little cottage where we flatter ourselves things are beginning to look more comfortable than last year. But I must put off my lecture on the Scotch marriage law till I can give it in person at an appropriate place for Langholm is within a stage of G'etna Green. In general I would say it is high time something were done to put the law of both countries on a single footing on so important a subject. But I am interrupted & obliged to conclude with the assurance that I am ever your Ladyships truly obliged & very faithful servant,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 21 *July*, 1813.

Our motions have been very uncertain for three weeks past owing to a threatening of the scarlet fever's breaking out in the cottage of one of my servants—luckily it proved a false alarm otherwise it would probably have got into our own family & it would have been impossible to stir from home. It is now very mild but last year was terribly severe.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE ¹

ABBOTSFORD, *Saturday*, 24th *July* [1813]

DEAR JOHN,—I sent you the order, and have only to hope it arrived safe and in good time. I waked the boy at three o'clock myself, having slept little, less on account of the money than of the time. Surely you should have

¹ For complete version of this letter see Vol. I, Appendix, p. 427.

written, three or four days before, the probable amount of the deficit, and, as on former occasions, I would have furnished you with means of meeting it. These expresses, besides every other inconvenience, excite surprise in my family and in the neighbourhood. I know no justifiable occasion for them but the unexpected return of a bill. I do not consider you as answerable for the success of plans, but I do and must hold you responsible for giving me, in distinct and plain terms, your opinion as to any difficulties which may occur, and that in such time that I may make arrangements to obviate them if possible.

Of course if anything has gone wrong you will come out here to-morrow. But if, as I hope and trust, the cash arrived safe, you will write to me, under cover to the Duke of Buccleuch, Drumlanrig Castle, Dumfries-shire. I shall set out for that place on Monday morning early.

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

ABBOTSFORD, 25th July 1813

DEAR JAMES,—I address the following jobation for John to you, that you may see whether I do not well to be angry, and enforce upon him the necessity of constantly writing his fears as well as his hopes. You should rub him often on this point, for his recollection becomes rusty the instant I leave town and am not in the way to rack him with constant questions. I hope the presses are doing well, and that you are quite stout again. Yours truly,

W. S.

[*Enclosure*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

MY GOOD FRIEND JOHN,—The post brings me no letter from you, which I am much surprised at, as you must

suppose me anxious to learn that your express arrived. I think he must have reached you before post-hours, and James or you *might* have found a minute to say so in a single line. I once more request that you will be a business-like correspondent, and state your provisions for every week prospectively. I do not expect you to *warrant them*, which you rather perversely seem to insist is my wish, but I do want to be aware of their nature and extent, that I may provide against the possibility of miscarriage. The calendar, to which you refer me, tells me what sums are due, but cannot tell your shifts to pay them, which are naturally altering with circumstances, and of which alterations I request to have due notice. You say you *could not suppose* Sir W. Forbes would have refused the long-dated bills ; but that you *had* such an apprehension is clear, both because in the calendar these bills were rated two months lower, and because, three days before, you wrote me an enigmatical expression of your apprehensions, instead of saying plainly there was a chance of your wanting £350, when I would have sent you an order to be used conditionally.

All I desire is unlimited confidence and frequent correspondence, and that you will give me weekly at least the fullest anticipation of your resources, and the probability of their being effectual. I may be disappointed in my own, of which you shall have equally timeous notice. Omit no exertions to procure the use of money, even for a month or six weeks, for time is most precious. The large balance due in January from the trade, and individuals, which I cannot reckon at less than £4000, will put us finally to rights ; and it will be a shame to founder within sight of harbour. The greatest risk we run is from such ill-considered despatches as those of Friday. Suppose that I had gone to Drumlanrig—suppose the poney had set up—suppose a thousand things—and we were ruined for want of your telling your apprehensions in due time. Do not plague yourself to vindicate this sort of manage-

ment ; but if you have escaped the consequences (as to which you have left me uncertain), thank God, and act more cautiously another time. It was quite the same to me on what day I sent that draft ; indeed it must have been so if I had the money in my cash account, and if I had not, the more time given me to provide it the better.

Now, do not affect to suppose that my displeasure arises from your not having done your utmost to realize funds, and that utmost having failed. It is one mode, to be sure, of exculpation, to suppose one's self accused of something they are not charged with, and then to make a querulous or indignant defence, and complain of the injustice of the accuser. The head and front of your offending is precisely your not writing explicitly, and I request this may not happen again. It is your fault and I believe arises either from an ill-judged idea of smoothing matters to me—as if I were not behind the curtain—or a general reluctance to allow that any danger is near, until it is almost unparriable. I shall be very sorry if anything I have said gives you pain ; but the matter is too serious for all of us, to be passed over without giving you my explicit sentiments. To-morrow I set out for Drumlanrig, and shall not hear from you till Tuesday or Wednesday. Make yourself master of the post-town—Thornhill, probably, or Sanquhar. As Sir W. F. & Co. have cash to meet my order, nothing, I think, can have gone wrong, unless the boy perished by the way. Therefore, in faith and hope, and—that I may lack none of the Christian virtues—in charity with your dilatory worship, I remain very truly yours,¹

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

¹ For correct version of this letter see Vol. I, Appendix, p. 429.

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—My friendly agent in town has intimated his opinion that the Banks there will boggle at the date of the inclosed Bill of £666, which I have therefore directed him to return to you without offering it for discount. But as my occasions here require the money and as I conceive it will be the same thing or rather more agreeable to you to have the bill discounted in a distant part of the country I have used the freedom in lieu of the bill returned to draw on you two bills of £333 each at three months being the discountable date at the country Branches. The only trouble you will have in this matter will be to intrust me with the original bill a week before the others fall due & then Sir William Forbes' people will readily let me have the value which I shall transmit to you. I send off a great lot of Swift tomorrow & shall certainly keep my time. On Monday I go to Drumlanrig Castle for a few days—Have the goodness to address a line to me there letting me know if this modification of the transaction is agreeable to you—I had no time to consult you upon it having only got my letter this morning & the cash being payable on Monday. I must therefore trust to your kindness for accepting the bills & request you to believe me Your faithful Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD *Saturday 25 July 1813*¹[*Stevenson*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR HARTSTONGE,—On the eve of our departure it occurs to me that if your kind exertions are able to procure the discount for me in Dublin which circumstances would render a particular favour at this period your letters may not reach me on my Yorkshire rambles [in] time enough to make my remittances to Edinburgh adjust

¹ “25 July 1813” is in another hand.

the draught Acc. Will you therefore be so good as remit the money if you can procure it for me to Mr. John Ballantyne whose Receipt shall be sufficient for it. He is aware of the purpose to which it is to be applied and this will save some time. I will hope to hear from you at length when you reach Eblana,¹ all our household join in kind love. The moleskins are procured and the purse is to be made but if you wish it to keep your money in dont buy land. Yours very truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 25th July 1813.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

[*Summer 1813*]

You may conceive, my dear friend the surprize and pleasure with which I received the precious relique your letter enclosed.² I say *you* may imagine it because your fancy can comprehend every thing but I will not allow that any one else can comprehend the matter in the slightest degree. I have had a thousand different fancies about the proper mode of enchasing and preserving it without being able to satisfy myself but more of this when I can acquaint you with the result. My pleasure was the greater at being possessed of this inestimable relique of distressed majesty because I had been interesting myself deeply about the discovery of Charles's grave without the least hope of being so far a partaker in its spoils. Perhaps it will interest Sir Henry Halford to know that the reports to which Clarendon alludes as unfavourable to the statesmen of the time were founded on the following circumstances. Oliver Cromwell was buried with great splendour and it was the hope and expectation of the Royalists that rites equally sumptuous

¹ i.e. Dublin.

² "A lock of the hair of Charles I which, at Dr. Baillie's request, Sir Henry Halford had transmitted to Scott when the royal martyr's remains were discovered at Windsor in April 1813."—LOCKHART. This letter should have been inserted earlier in the year, see p. 264.

or more should have been rendered to the body of Charles I. Accordingly it has been affirmed that a sum was actually appropriated for that purpose, and that as Charles II. employd it upon his pleasures, he was fain to shelter himself under the œconomical subterfuge that the grave of his father could not be discoverd—a matter highly improbable let Lord Clarendon say what he will and indeed as appears from his own narrative and that of Herbert as well as from the late remarkable discovery by no means accurately consistent with truth. I did not think Charles's hair had been quite so light—that of his father and I believe of all the Stuarts till Charles II was reddish. My friend James Skene of Rubislaw inherited from his mother a descendant of Bishop Juxon¹ the bible which Charles gave on the scaffold to that prelate with the emphatic and enigmatical word *Remember* to which no good clue has ever been found. I wish Dr. Baillie had been at Windsor. I should have liked to have known how the Regent lookd upon this solemn occasion for the incident was a trying one. Tory as I am my heart only goes with King Charles in his struggles and distresses for the fore part of his reign was a series of misconduct. However if he sowd the wind God knows he reaped the whirlwind and so did those who first drew the sword against him few of whom had occasion to congratulate their country or themselves upon the issue of those disastrous wars. And sound therefore be the sleep and henceforward undisturbd the ashes of this unhappy prince—in his private capacity he was a man of unimpeachd worth virtue and honour and bore his misfortunes with the spirit of a prince and the patience of a christian. His attachment to a particular form of worship was in him conscience for he adhered to the Church of England during his treaty in the Isle of Wight and afterwards when by giving up that favourite point he might have secured his reestablishment ; and in that sense he may be justly

¹ William Juxon (1582-1663), Archbishop of Canterbury.

considerd as a martyr, though his early political errors blemish his character as a King of England. My great-great-grandfather by the mothers side John Swinton of Swinton narrowly escaped being among the commissioners who tried him being an especial friend and confident of Old Noll (the more shame for him). He was one of the principal managers for Scotland during the interregnum and upon the Restoration finding himself in great danger of sharing the fate of Argyle he chose to assume the faith and manners of a quaker on which occasion it was observed if he had not *trembled* he would not have *quaked*. A grand-aunt of mine used to tell me her fathers astonishment who went to bed a fashionable young gentleman laying aside one of the rich laced suits of the time and upon awaking found a complete suit of Simon pure habiliments laid down in the stead of his fine clothes. But it saved his fathers neck and estate the court satisfying themselves with some gruesome fines which the family feel the effects of to this day. Some other relations got clapper-clawd on the other side losing both land and life for the Stuarts—so that I heard enough of the civil wars upon both sides of the question.—I must not conclude these desultory anecdotes without my kindest remembrances and thanks to Dr. Baillie through whose intercession I have been so much honored. I think with the sword of Montrose and this lock of the unfortunate Charles I am fairly set up as a Cavalier and it would be scarce possible for me to be anything else, were I disposed.

I really grieve for this juncture of affairs, but it will blow bye if the Regent has prudence. The minister would deserve well of his country who should exhort him to extend to his wife the protection of a husband, and *then* with a good grace exert the authority of one. I think, and have some reason for thinking, that had Perceval lived he would have attempted to place them on a less scandalous footing. I often think of the . . .

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

DRUMLANRIG, *Friday* [1813]

DEAR JOHN,—I enclose the order. Unfortunately, the Drumlarnrig post only goes thrice a-week ; but the Marquis of Queensberry, who carries this to Dumfries, has promised that the guard of the mail-coach shall deliver it by five to-morrow. I was less anxious, as your note said you could clear this month. It is a cruel thing, that no State you furnish excludes the arising of such unexpected claims as this for the taxes on the printing-office. What unhappy management to suffer them to run ahead in such a manner !—but it is in vain to complain. Were it not for your strange concealments, I should anticipate no difficulty in winding up these matters. But who can reckon upon a State where claims are kept out of view until they are in the hands of a *writer* ? If you have no time to say that *this* comes safe to hand, I suppose James may favour me so far. Yours truly,

W. S.

Let the guard be rewarded.

Let me know exactly what you *can* do and *hope* to do for next month ; for it signifies nothing raising money for you, unless I see it is to be of real service. Observe, I make you responsible for nothing but a fair statement.¹ The guard is known to the Marquis, who has good-naturedly promised to give him this letter with his own hand ; so it must reach you in time, though probably past five on Saturday.²

[*Lockhart*]

¹ “ John Ballantyne had embarked no capital—not a shilling—in the business ; and was bound by the contract to limit himself to an allowance of £300 a-year, in consideration of his *management*, until there should be an overplus of profits ! ”—LOCKHART.

² For correct and full version of this letter see Vol. I, Appendix, p. 432.

To JOHN BALLANTYNE ¹

PENRITH, *Aug. 10, 1813*

DEAR JOHN,—I enclose you an order for £350. I shall remain at Rokeby until Saturday or Sunday, and be at Abbotsford on Wednesday at latest.

I hope the printing-office is going on well. I fear, from the state of accompts between the companies, restrictions on the management and expense will be unavoidable, which may trench upon James's comforts. I cannot observe hitherto that the printing-office is paying off, but rather adding to its embarrassments ; and it cannot be thought that I have either means or inclination to support a losing concern at the rate of £200 a-month. If James could find a monied partner, an active man who understood the commercial part of the business, and would superintend the conduct of the cash, it might be the best for all parties ; for I really am not adequate to the fatigue of mind which these affairs occasion me, though I must do the best to struggle through them. Believe me yours, &c.

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

[*10th Aug. 1813*]

MY DEAR MORRITT,—Our disappointment of this morning ² which on any other occasion would have been theme of sufficient mortification is quite lost in anxiety about dear Mrs. Morritts health. I trust this will find her continuing better and would never have forgiven

¹ From this letter one gathers that it was Scott who suggested to Constable the desirability of getting a credit for £2000 to £4000, not Constable. In fact Scott asks Constable himself to secure this, and only when the latter declined and suggested appeal to some friend did the Duke occur to Scott's mind. The complete version of above letter occurs in Vol. I, Appendix, p. 435.

² Morrirt's letter of 8th August putting off Scott's visit.

you had you allowd us upon any point of mere ceremony (and what better could our meeting under such circumstances have been) to have come forward at the risque of disturbing her. When we hear that she is getting stout we will talk of taking amends for our little tour either on our return from London if we go there next spring or by your coming to Abbotsford next autumn for my cottage though very small has room for Mrs. M. and you—all this discussion will be for a happier moment meanwhile I write chiefly to assure you of our deep and sincere interest in your present distress and to beg you will let me know how Mrs. Morritt is by a line addressd to Abbotsford where we will be I think by Saturday. I intend going a little out of the direct road to spend a day with Southey if I have the good fortune to find him at home at Keswick. Believe me ever Dear Morritt Most faithfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

BROUGH—*Tuesday*

[*Law*]

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO

ABBOTSFORD, 12 *Aug.* 1813

MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter has had a most weary dance after me through the North of England, where I have been rambling a good while ; and, being disappointed in an intended visit to my friend Morritt at Rokeby, all my letters miscarried for a season, being sent to his charge. Assuredly I will have the greatest pleasure in reading any thing of yours, and recommending it to the booksellers.

I trust this glorious news from Spain¹ may eventually lead this Disturber of Europe to think of offering fair and

¹ Probably the Battle of Vittoria (21st June) and subsequent British successes.

honourable terms of peace, which would be as advantageous, I am convinced, for the literary as for the commercial public.

I will not omit any opportunity of doing what you wish ; but Jeffrey and Gifford are the only managers of these reviews, and are, like other great men, sufficiently arbitrary in their admission or rejection of articles.

My present address is "Abbotsford, Melrose," where I have settled myself in a little cottage, with about one hundred acres of land, as my "*hoc erat in votis*."¹ We have the living fountain and the silver Tweed ; but, alas ! the groves are yet to rise.

Believe me, dear Sir, with sincere regard, your faithful humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, 1832]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

ABBOTSFORD, Aug. 16, 1813

DEAR JOHN,—I am quite satisfied it is impossible for J. B. and Co. to continue business longer than is absolutely necessary for the sale of stock and extrication of their affairs. The fatal injury which their credit has sustained, as well as your adopting a profession in which I sincerely hope you will be more fortunate, renders the closing of the bookselling business inevitable. With regard to the printing, it is my intention to retire from that also, so soon as I can possibly do so with safety to myself, and with the regard I shall always entertain for James's interest. Whatever loss I may sustain will be preferable to the life I have lately led, when I seem surrounded by a sort of magic circle, which neither permits me to remain at home in peace, nor to stir abroad with pleasure. Your first exertion as an auctioneer may probably be on "that

¹ Horace, *Satires*, ii. 6. "This used to be among my prayers—a portion of land not so very large, but which should contain a garden, and near the homestead a spring of ever-flowing water, and a bit of forest to complete it."

distinguished, select, and inimitable collection of books, made by an amateur of this city retiring from business.” I do not feel either health or confidence in my own powers sufficient to authorize me to take a long price for a new poem, until these affairs shall have been in some measure digested. This idea has been long running in my head, but the late fatalities which have attended this business have quite decided my resolution. I will write to James to-morrow, being at present annoyed with a severe headache. Yours truly,

W. SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

[Extract]

20th August 1813

THE evil of this business is having carried on the concern so very long—until its credit was wholly ruined—*before* having recourse to my assistance ; for what I have done ought to have cleared it, if the business had been in a situation to do anything for itself. But I will not do in my own case what I have condemned in others—that is, attempt to support a falling business beyond the moment that it appears rational to hope for its being retrieved. I have no debts of my own of any consequence, excepting such as have been incurred in this unlucky business.¹

[*Ballantyne-Humbug Handled*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR SIR,—I have a letter from John Ballantyne on my return hither mentioning that you could oblige me with an advance of £500 on security of the acceptance you hold of his, for me. This will perfectly answer my purpose if it does not inconvenience you, which I trust

¹ For correct and full versions of this and the preceding letter see Vol. I, Appendix, pp. 437, 439.

your kindness will not permit it to do. You can retain the Bill till due in security of the advance and the repayment shall be made by a draught on London either when the Bill is payable or soon after the month of January when I shall have plenty of cash. We were delighted with Drumlanrig which is a most princely abode, a large Gothic quadrangular building in style and character not unlike to Herriot's hospital in Edinburgh and planned by the same great master Inigo Jones.¹ It is situated on the extremity of a lofty hill which projects like a sort of promontory from a mountainous back ground, and overlooks a large tract of comparatively open country so that the Castle looks quite the queen of the valley. The Nith runs near it through a most romantic channel of broken rocks where the walk of the last Duchess of Queensboro—"Fair Kitty blooming young and gay—" is led with some taste but the park and the mountains are sorely divested of wood, the late abominable old Q having laid the axe to the root with a witness.² After ten days residence with our Chief and his Lady, we strolled on as far as Keswick where I spent a day with Southey. He read me some parts of a poem to be entitled *Don Roderick* ³ (the last Gothic King of Spain being the hero) it is most highly impressive, and what is curious he has a picture of D-Roderick at confession, an exact pendant, a counterpart to mine for he represents him a man more sinned against than sinning : as he had not seen my verses the coincidence was very striking. As for myself the sight of Carlisle castle set me trumping up a tale (not for publication being too wild and clannish)

¹ There seems always to have been a mystification about the building of Heriot's Hospital. Though the plan of it has been assigned to Inigo Jones, more than one Master Mason is mentioned in the Hospital records for 1675. See Wilson, *Memorials of Edinburgh*, ii. 168. "The Architect of Heriot's Hospital . . . is now generally understood to have been W. Wallace, 'the King's Master Mason.' At his death in 1631, the work was carried on by William Aytoun."—*F.L.*

² William, third Earl of March and fourth Duke of Queensberry.

³ See note, pp. 78, 79.

called Kinmont Willie. You will find the story in the Border Minstrelsy. If I have ever courage to write out my tale you shall have a copy. We found the young fry all well on our return. I ever am Most truly yours

ABBOTSFORD 21st Aug 1813.

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO ARCHD. CONSTABLE, BOOKSELLER, CROSS, EDINR.

DEAR SIR,—I suspect James Ballantyne has alarmed you somewhat more than was necessary with the late communication which he made. The truth is, my own affairs are in very good order, and I have no doubt of retrieving those of J. B. & Co with management. But I wrote to John in great wrath at a late blunder of his, and should have prepared myself, had I met the creditors of the house, to put matters in a good train of settlement. The fact is, that, with my own resources, a temporary credit of from £2000 to £4000 would amply suffice to put these matters out of all danger. Even the smaller sum, if it could be raised this or next month, would very well answer, because I have every reason to expect considerable remittances during the months of November and December. I wish you would look into the state of the affairs and satisfy yourself about them, and James will show you a long letter I wrote to him this morning on the subject.

If you could oblige us with procuring the temporary assistance wanted, you should fix the price of the next poem¹ yourself. I would be obliged, however, to reserve a half for Longman and Murray, betwixt them. I mean to go to press in Novr. when I should expect acceptances for £2000, leaving the balance to be accepted for when

¹ This was to be *The Lord of the Isles*. "During these anxious months of September, October, and November . . . he had also proceeded to mature in his own mind the plan of the *Lord of the Isles*, and executed such a portion of the First Canto as gave him confidence to renew his negotiation with Constable for the sale of the whole, or part of its copyright."—LOCKHART. See earlier letters and notes.

the work was finishd. If this can be done, I should want no further accommodation than a credit for £2000, betwixt Septr. and Novr.—if the sale could not be so adjusted, £4000 would be necessary—I am not so low in purse as I suffer John Ballantyne to suppose, having always kept about £400 or £500 by me for a pinch, and my very considerable income is paid quarterly. If I speak to any of my wealthy friends, I must explain the whole business. I should startle them to a certainty, and probably blow up the whole business. But if you can set your shoulder to mine, to the extent of £2000, advanced in such sums as may be necessary, and at six months' date, we could deposit with you the copy-rights on security, and also the copy right of the new poem. If your London Banker would accept our joint security for such a sum as £2000 or £3000, this would do still better. I rather undervalue my property of various kinds, exclusive of these copy-rights and stock, when I reckon my house, farm, freehold, money lent, and library, at £10,000, so you would be pretty snug with all the stock and copyrights to boot ; and my own interest with the banks being good, I could easily get cash for your acceptances, while I should think the idea of your being to get another poem would account for their being in my hands without prejudice to your own credit. How far, however, your situation will permit you to embroil yourself in other people's matters is a very different question, and, be assured, I should be the last person to press you so to do, though I am fully conscious that the temporary inconvenience is the only evil that can befall you. As for the sum of £5000 or £6000, I have not the least occasion for more than two thirds of it at the very utmost, and one third will fully supply my wants. I shall always have the deepest sense of the interest you have taken in this troublesome affair, and am very truly yours,

ABBOTSFORD 24 Augt [postmarked 1813] WALTER SCOTT
[Constable and Kilpatrick]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

ABBOTSFORD, 24th August 1813

DEAR JAMES,—Mr. Constable's advice is, as I have always found it, sound, sensible, and friendly—and I shall be guided by it. But I have no wealthy friend who would join in security with me to such an extent ; and to apply in quarters where I might be refused, would ensure disclosure. I conclude John has shown Mr. C. the state of the affairs ; if not, I would wish him to do so directly. If the proposed accommodation could be granted to the firm on my personally joining in the security, the whole matter would be quite safe, for I have to receive in the course of the winter some large sums from my father's estate.¹ Besides which, I shall certainly be able to go to press in November with a new poem ; or, if Mr. Constable's additional security would please the bankers better, I could ensure Mr. C. against the possibility of loss, by assigning the copyrights, together with that of the new poem, or even my library, in his relief. In fact, if he looks into the affairs, he will I think see that there is no prospect of any eventual loss to the creditors, though I may be a loser myself. My property here is unincumbered ; so is my house in Castle Street ; and I have no debts out of my own family, excepting a part of the price of Abbotsford, which I am to retain for four years. So that, literally, I have no claims upon me unless those arising out of this business ; and when it is

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Clerkship, £1300 | } | considered that my income is above £2000 a-year, even if the printing-office pays nothing, I should hope no one can possibly be a loser by me. I am sure I would strip myself to my shirt rather than it should be the case ; and my only reason for wishing to stop the concern was to do open justice |
| Sheriffdom, . 300 | | |
| Mrs. Scott, . 200 | | |
| Interest, . 100 | | |
| Somers, (say) 200 | | |
| £2100 | | |

¹ "He probably alludes to the final settlement of accounts with the Marquis of Abercorn."—LOCKHART.

to all persons. It must have been a bitter pill to me. I can more confidently expect some aid from Mr. Constable, or from Longman's house, because they can look into the concern and satisfy themselves how little chance there is of their being losers, which others cannot do. Perhaps between them they might manage to assist us with the credit necessary, and go on in winding up the concern by occasional acceptances.

An odd thing has happened. I have a letter, by order of the Prince Regent, offering me the laureateship in the most flattering terms. Were I my own man, as you call it, I would refuse this offer (with all gratitude); but, as I am situated, £300 or £400 a-year is not to be sneezed at upon a point of poetical honour—and it makes me a better man to that extent. I have not yet written, however. I will say little about Constable's handsome behaviour, but shall not forget it. It is needless to say I shall wish him to be consulted in every step that is taken. If I should lose all I advanced to this business, I should be less vexed than I am at this moment. I am very busy with Swift at present, but shall certainly come to town if it is thought necessary; but I should first wish Mr. Constable to look into the affairs to the bottom. Since I have personally superintended them, they have been winding up very fast, and we are now almost within sight of harbour. I will also own it was partly ill-humour at John's blunder last week that made me think of throwing things up. Yours truly,

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

TO CHARLES, DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

MY LORD DUKE,—An affair of considerable importance to my family induces me to add one to your load of letters & trouble your Graces tried & uniform friendship.

By the terms of my agreement with the Ballantynes I am entitled to redeem the copy-rights I sold them of the *Lady of the Lake* Rokeby Lay &c &c at this period for £4000 or something less. This sum I can easily raise within the year but not within a less space & the offer is in every respect a most desirable one as the copy-rights afford a good interest while I live & unlike other property would become doubly valuable to my family if I should slip off. I can easily get accomodated with the money upon a credit in London if any person of known estate & opulence has so much confidence in my prudence & integrity as to guarantee that the sum shall be regularly replaced. Morritt would have done this with readiness but the dangerous illness of his Lady prevents my applying to him & induces me to ask your Grace whether you can stretch your good opinion of me to the extent of guaranteeing my credit to such an extent. I do this with the utmost confidence that you will have no other trouble in the matter than to grant such a letter & receive it back at the end of the period & my confidence depends on these things. 1st. That I can easily resell the copyrights in whole or in part should I have the least difficulty in raising the money & that this may be done for your Graces relief even more easily should I die in the interim. 2dly That my fortune independent of these copy-rights & of the funds I propose to apply to the purchase is upwards of £2000 yearly & about £10,000 in house land &c &c. I am not asking nor desiring any loan from your Grace which I know would be inconvenient¹ & which really I do not stand in any occasion to need but merely the honor of your sanction to my credit as a good man for

¹ Writing to Scott on 8th May regarding Scott of Raeburn's wish to sell his vote in Roxburghshire and the necessity that he should sell it to "a steady friend" as he helped to retain it, the duke had said: "I have no hesitation of telling you that it would be extremely inconvenient to me at this moment to make any advance. I have had some very heavy demands which have left me very bare." Everyone in 1813 seems to have been in the same plight.

£4000, & the motive of your Graces interference would be sufficiently obvious to the London Shylocks as your constant kindness & protection is no secret to the world. Will your Grace consider whether you can do what I propose in conscience & safety & favour me with your answer. I have only to add that this will wind up all my pecuniary engagements which many years service without salary had somewhat enhanced. For my dear Lord with all the countenance I have had from the public & the still more useful & flattering patronage of private friends among whom your Grace has ever proved the first & most efficient, I have had my own battle with the world. I have fought it manfully however & pride has supplied the lack of oeconomy in gradually advancing me towards ease & independence.

I have a very flattering offer from the Prince Regent of his own free motion to make me poet laureate. I am very much embarassd by it—I am on the one hand afraid of giving offence where no one would willingly offend & perhaps losing an opportunity of smoothing the way to my youngsters through life. On the other hand the office is a ridiculous one somehow or other—item & I should be well quizzd but that I should not mind—My real feeling of reluctance lies deeper—it is that favourd as I have been by the public I should be considerd with some justice I fear as engrossing a petty emolument which while it was of no great consequence to me might do real service to some poorer brother of the Muses. I shall be most anxious to have your Graces advice on this subject—there seems something churlish & perhaps conceited in rejecting a favour so handsomely offerd on the part of the Sovereigns representative & on the other hand I feel much disposed to shake myself free of it. I should make a bad courtier & an ode-maker is described by Pope as a poet out of his way or out of his senses. I will find some excuse for protracting my reply till I can have the advantage of your Graces advice & opinion

and remain in the mean time very truly My Lord Duke
Your Graces obliged & grateful

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 24 Aug. 1813.

I trust your Grace will not suppose me capable of making such a request as the enclosed upon any idle or unnecessary speculation. But as I stand situated it is a matter of deep interest to me to prevent these copy-rights from being disposed of either hastily or at under prices. I could have half the booksellers in London for my sureties on a hint of a new poem but bankers do not like people in trade and my brains are not ready to spin another web. So your Grace must take me under your princely care as in the days of lang syne and I think I can say upon the sincerity of an honest man there is not the most distant chance of your having any trouble or expence through my means.¹

[*Buccleuch*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE, BOOKSELLER, CROSS, EDINBURGH

MY DEAR SIR,—It is odd, that yesterday, while considering the plan which you suggested, it never occurred to me that I *have one* friend of the most undoubted responsibility, who, I think and believe, from the habits upon which we have long lived, will guarantee my credit to a London Banker for a twelvemonth to the extent of £4000, and farther credit, considering what I have in Scotland, would be unnecessary. I have written to him today, and shall have an answer by tuesday, and I so confidently anticipate its being favourable that I think you may propose the matter to your friendly Banker² in

¹ For letter to John Ballantyne of same date see vol. i. Appendix, p. 442.

² Constable accordingly wrote to Messrs. Brooks, Son & Dixon, London, on the 25th recommending Scott for a credit of £4000: "Mr Scott's security would be his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry which we need not add is the first that could be offered in the country." On the 28th they agreed, but only on condition that Scott deposited bills to the

London without very great chance of the plan proving abortive by the non-accession of the Duke of Buccleuch, whom I would propose as my guarantee. Of course, the more simple the security could be made, the less trouble would it give his Grace, and if a simple letter of guarantee would be admitted, so much the better. The time presses, and John, from an odd and habitual reluctance to say the worst, is apt not to intimate his wants till the last pinch, which has, in one or two cases, given me great displeasure ; but quarrelling would avail nothing at present. So that the sooner the necessary arrangements can be made so much the better. I really have little doubt of the Duke's acquiescence. I have acted as Godfather to his last child, and been considered in all respects as an intimate and valued connection of the family, and he has the true spirit of a border Chief,

To be a hedge about his friends,
A hackle to his foes.

I trust to have his answer by tuesday ; meanwhile you can ascertain the disposition of your banker. This, if the Duke accedes, will do much better than any idea of implicating you, and will leave time to think of a new poem at leisure, and at a more fortunate juncture. If you write to London on rect. of this you may have an answer by Wednesday or thursday, before which time you will be in possession of the Duke's answer to my proposal. I have not gone further into particulars than mentioning my wish to have a credit to the above extent, to enable me to prevent my copy rights from being hastily disposed of, and to avoid the consequent loss. It is unnecessary, I presume, to be particular to the banker about their matters.

amount required, the duke's to be " a collateral security." The duke's answer to Scott was written from Drumlanrig on the 28th : " I shall with pleasure comply with your request of guaranteeing the £4000—you must however furnish me with the *form of a letter* to this effect as I am completely ignorant of transactions of this nature." See Lockhart. The letter did not reach Scott till the 11th, and the letters that follow betray his anxiety.

When this affair is in a prospect of arrangement, which I trust will be next week, I have to request, as a particular favour, that you will spare me a day here with the Ballantynes, that I may explain these matters more fully, which I am desirous should be in their presence. I would come to town for this purpose, but it would interrupt Swift ; besides, I wish you to see this place, and am very desirous to thank you under my own roof for the deep interest you have taken in these unfortunate affairs.

If your London Shylock wants a pound of flesh, it will fall to James B's lot to find it, for my proposed noble surety never had an ounce, and John B. as little, and I have dwindled sadly under these tirrits and frights. I think you will be pleased with what I have done, and am very sincerely yours,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 24 August [1813]

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE ¹

[Extract]

[25th August 1813]

AFTER some meditation, last night, it occurred to me I had some title to ask the Duke of Buccleuch's guarantee to a cash-account for £4000, as Constable proposes. I have written to him accordingly, and have very little doubt that he will be my surety. If this cash-account be in view, Mr. Constable will certainly *assist us* until the necessary writings are made out—I beg your pardon—I dare say I am very stupid ; but very often you don't consider that I can't follow details which would be quite obvious to a man of business ;—for instance, you tell me daily, “ that *if* the sums I count upon *are* forthcoming, the results must be as I suppose.” But—in a week—the scene is changed, and all I can do, and more, is inadequate to bring about these results. I protest I don't know if at

¹ For correct version of this letter see vol. i. Appendix, p. 442.

this moment £4000 *will* clear us out. After all, you are vexed, and so am I ; and it is needless to wrangle who has a right to be angry. Commend me to James. Yours truly,

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

[Extract]

August 27, 1813

I BLUSH to think of the straits I am reduced to—I who could have a thousand or two on my own credit in any previous period of my life. *As for sending me States, they only confuse me.* If the calendar *be really perfect* it is the best State for me. I am afraid that all the acceptances you counted for October and November are thrown back, as well as those for September. I must know how this is before I engage farther. It would be a fine thing if, after getting this credit, if it can be got, you should (that is, the business should) a third time leave me in the hole to struggle for myself. For you must be sensible that by degrees I have been left wholly alone, and to tell you a secret, I would rather the business stood on your acceptances than mine.¹

[*Ballantyne-Humbug Handled*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE, BOOKSELLER, EDINR.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by your friendly communication,² which is not very different from what I apprehended would prove the practical view of these affairs. But I think the copy rights and debts may both turn out better than your state holds out. We will, however,

¹ For full letter see vol. i. Appendix, p. 445.

² For Constable's letter of 26th August, in which, after a careful examination of John Ballantyne's "extended statement of the affairs of both concerns," he draws up an estimate of the debit and credit account, see *Archibald Constable, etc.*, iii. 27-30.

abide by your valuation as our rule of conduct for the present, which will prevent disappointments. I do not anticipate any great difficulty in clearing all quietly & creditably if the Duke comes forward, and your bankers are, as they say, agreeable. Our immediately applicable funds will then stand thus :

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| I furnish, month of Sept., | £750 . 0 . 0 |
| Oct. & Nov:, | 800 . 0 . 0 |
| Dec., from £500 to £1000, say . . | 750 . 0 . 0 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £2300 . 0 . 0 |
| Bills presumed to be discountable . | 1500 . 0 . 0 |
| in the above period. | |
| Cash credit, say | 3500 . 0 . 0 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £7300 . 0 . 0 |

With this provision we can go on very well till the new year, for every payment is clearing the credit of the company, and if no sales can be made, which I apprehend will prove the case, a few hundreds might be raised at the Banks untill spring—the difference between the provision and demands cannot, I think, exceed from £600 to £1000, which will be then all that we need in the Edinburgh money market. After the new year about £4000 is due, to which may be added £1000, which I shall need to be repaid between Decr. and May. Against this sum of £5000 we have debts and receipts of printing house ; and I think I can promise to replace £1000 at Whity., by which period we will be clear of all acceptances and open accompts if we have any thing like John's usual success in collecting debts—at any rate the floating balance cannot well exceed £2000. In this case ample time will be afforded to dispose of the stock and copy rights at the most favourable period. For, when the pressure is over, we can lie on our oars very quietly for a time. I can say with some comfort that if your state is realized, the loss will be severe, but not by any means

intolerable, and I will certainly endeavour to maintain the Printing House, which is a profitable concern, untill some other partner shall cast up for James, which would save probably a thousand or two. It produces about £1800 a year which is not [to] be rashly parted with.

I am very anxious about my answer from the Duke. If it be as I expect, his shoulders are broad enough to bear me through a deeper stream. The vexation to me in this business has been John's sanguine temper, who perpetually fixd some point when he hoped to get on well, and as regularly disappointed me—something like the spoild children in princes street, whose maids [have] to carry them twenty or [thirty] yards in hopes they will then be able to walk, when behold, whenever they are set down, the ricketty brats roar louder than ever and will not budge a step.

I will be most happy to see you when you have your answer from the Bankers, which will, I presume, be on thursday or friday. But I will write the instant I have the Duke's reply. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 28 *August* [1813]

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

DEAR JOHN,—I received your state & one from Constable to the same effect. The prospect he holds forth seems little less than ruinous. I doubt if it would be worse if we stopd at once. But he may have his own reasons for depreciating the stock & copy-rights which circumstances will enable us to detect. I recur to the plan of purchasing the copy rights myself rather than letting them go off so cheap. In case of my death their value would be considerable to my family. I shall hear from the Duke tomorrow probably or next day which will be decisive—

I cannot understand how out of near £4000 of debts only £1500 are to be counted as good—a total bankruptcy of the trade could scarce produce a greater defalcation. Get at the grounds of this estimate.

In your state I hope you have included £800 due at Royal Bank of Scotland in October. On the other hand the £700 sent to Ireland will not be a debt unless to the extent Mr. Hartstonge can send us value for it & I think it is in the list. Hartstonges bill of £500 will be here next week early—

I have been here for one day in fine spirits for company as you may suppose. I return this day.

As to Somers—the proposal was to republish the original 16 volumes in twelve volumes & I have made my arrangements accordingly. But it was also intended that there should be two additional volumes but I never could get Miller to say whether these two volumes were to go on or no, nor do I believe any collection has been made for them. I am yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

MERTOUN 29 *Augt.* [1813]

[*Signet Library*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*On same sheet*]

30th

DEAR JAMES,—No letter today so the same uncertainty prevails as to our prospects of support. In this state I will support the firm with the last penny of my own money but I will not borrow from others without the rational prospect of being able to pay them punctually. If therefore Constable inclines to advance what is due on the first by acceptance or otherwise you may deposit in his hands the inclosed receipt for my quarters salary: the balance may be retained if that can be don[e] for the immediate expences of my family which is now almost

pennyless. But I cannot prevail on myself to apply to the Banks for any supply for it would be little better than swindling unless I have the most decisive assurance of support. You must therefore look for no aid from me on the 2d. unless I hear decidedly on that subject & I think your only way will be frankly to apply to Sir W. F.'s house which *you* should do & not John. They can have no interest in stopping your credit on a personal acceptance to themselves & will therefore either renew it or discount the bills in deposit. But whether they do so or not I cannot consent to raise money here by acceptance or to borrow it from friends nor have I any great chance of being successful should I attempt it. Indeed I cannot see that *any* mode of sale can make the funds worse than Constable's estimate. As to myself my dear James I must take my fate as I best can. Constable need not suppose that I will go mendicating from the booksellers a contract for a new poem. I would no more do so than you would sing ballads in the street for your relief. Scotland & I must part as old friends have done before, for I will not live where I must be necessarily lookd down upon by those who once lookd up to me. But Scotland is not all the world though to me the dearest corner of it. I will see justice done to every one to the last penny & will neither withdraw my person nor screen my property untill all are satisfied. But then I will endeavour to exchange my ample appointments here for a moderate provision abroad which will be no matter of difficulty. Or perhaps my brethren may discharge my duty for a twelvemonth untill I have fitted myself for my new state in society by absence & philosophy. As for poetry it is quite out of the question. My facility in composition arose from buoyant spirits & a light heart which must now be exchanged for decent & firm composure under adversity.

I assure you I am as sorry for you as for myself & for John also though I cannot but blame him for suffering my delusion to continue long after his own must have

vanishd. But his mind is a light & sanguine one and I trust will soon get over his present distress & thrive in his new vocation.

At times I think the Duke will not fail to assist me— But he does not know the extent of the emergency & then—“put not your faith in princes” rushes on my memory. Yet even if I had his guarantee in my pocket & though Constable actually had the consent of his bankers to the arrangement I cannot see how the 2d. is to be put over without indulgence or renewal for the whole or a part of the sum due. For I have no confidence of getting any considerable sum at the banks here were I sure of paying it next week. I think however were you plainly to tell Sir W. F. that it is impossible you can pay the acceptance & that you have reason (which may be expressd stronger or weaker as circumstances will warrant) to expect a very large sum in aid of your business but that whether you receive it or are disappointed this shall be your last application for indulgence I say—this statement from *you personally* not from John who has been too rash in pledging his word on many occasions would in all probability procure delay—since stopping could not increase but must necessarily diminish their security of every kind. The indulgence need not exceed a fortnight. It is no doubt most unpleasant to ask it but am I on roses? You can state that you are winding up the bookselling concern with all dispatch as their own [information] will show them and when a man has renounced [speculation] & is labouring & effectually labouring to pay [his debts] he is surely entitled to some indulgence from [his] creditors.

It may be necessary to say that if the D. declines to assist me I shall apply to no other person. I will not send this letter till tomorrow when we will see what the post brings.

Tuesday 31st.

The inclosed from my princely Chief arrived this morning having miscarried to Edinr. You will show Mr. Constable the first passage & make him comprehend the rest relates to another matter. It might not be so well to let it be known that my disposition to reject the *laurel* (which I *have* rejected) was prompted or abetted by the Duke & Co[nstable] is no keeper of secrets.—I send besides the rect. for £250 an order for £200—it is above my mark but will probably be cashd—& I will try to get £100 or two more in this place— But with the assurance of support.

“And the bright Star of Branksome to carry us through.”

I trust you will be able to do something for yourselves¹ with Constables and who can *now* be under no apprehension of being a loser, since my backing can be always made . . . some how or other—even if his bankers . . . be agreeable. But if he has a favorable . . . on thursday then the coast will be clear the . . . probably I may not be allowd to draw . . . the cash credit settled. With all this however you will acquaint me either by sending an express on thursday by whom I would wish to have some stamps for there is difficulty to get them here—or perhaps you or John might come off that day by the mail at two o'clock & if you write tomorrow I will have a horse waiting for you at Cross-lee toll-bar which is about four miles from this place. You will judge however whether it will be better to do so or to wait for Constables leisure which I expect will enable him to afford me a visit. I have been much relieved for my mind was (I know not why) quite made up for the very worst that could befall.

¹ No reply has yet been received from the duke, but some other scheme is under consideration. Constable, in a letter to Cadell of 30th August, refers to some proposal: “The Bard appears very cool indeed—he may probably turn warmer as the winter months approach which is not the usual case—a partner for a £1800 a year Printing House will not be easily got I fear.”

You will judge whether to offer my Drat or to make your appeal to Sir W. F.'s house which I do not think would be ineffectual. I confide in your prudence always remarking that the more you *strain* my credit the greater our future embarassments must needs be. It has been Johns error

[*Signet Library*]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,—On my return here I found, to my no small surprise, a letter tendering me the laurel vacant by the death of the poetical Pye. I have declined the appointment, as being incompetent to the task of annual commemoration ; but chiefly as being provided for in my professional department, and unwilling to incur the censure of engrossing the emolument attached to one of the new appointments which seems proper to be filled by a man of literature who has no other views in life. Will you forgive me, my dear friend, if I own I had you in my recollection.¹ I have given Croker the hint, and

¹ In writing to his wife from Streatham on Sunday, 5th September 1813, Southey quotes this letter at length and adds that as soon as he got it, he wrote to Croker stating he would not write odes to order but that if he were at liberty to write or be silent as the spirit moved him on special occasions, he would accept the office. "The salary is but a nominal 120 l," he informs his wife. Scott had been under the impression the salary was £300 or £400 a year. See his letter to Southey later (13th November 1813). Ten weeks elapsed, due to delays in the appointment of the laureate, before Southey replied to this present letter. His reply concludes with the following generous feeling towards Scott : "We shall both be remembered hereafter, and ill betide him who shall institute a comparison between us. There has been no race ; we have both got to the top of the hill by different paths, and meet there not as rivals but as friends, each rejoicing in the success of the other." To C. W. W. Wynn, in a letter of 20th September 1813, he remarks that "the manner in which Scott declined it [the laureateship] was the handsomest possible ; nothing could be more friendly to me, or more honourable to himself." It is stated in *Southey's Life and Correspondence* (iv. 38) that "the offer of the office to Sir Walter was made without the Prince's knowledge," but the Prince's librarian wrote to Scott on 18th August 1813 to say he had that very day informed the Prince of his anxious desire that the laureateship should be conferred on Scott.

otherwise endeavoured to throw the office into your option.¹ I am uncertain if you will like it, for the laurel has certainly been tarnished by some of its wearers, and as at present managed, its duties are inconvenient and somewhat liable to ridicule. But the latter matter might be amended, and I should think the Regent's good sense would lead him to lay aside these regular² commemorations ; and as to the former point, it has been worn by Dryden of old, and by Warton in modern days. If you quote my own refusal against me, I reply—first, I have been luckier than you in holding two offices not usually conjoined ; secondly, I did not refuse it from any foolish prejudice against the situation—otherwise how durst I mention it to you, my elder brother in the muse?—but from a sort of internal hope that they would give it to you, upon whom it would be so much more worthily conferred. For I am not such an ass as not to know that you are my better in poetry, though I have had, probably but for a time, the tide of popularity in my favour. I have not time to add ten thousand other reasons, but I only wished to tell you how the matter was, and to beg you to think before you reject the offer which I flatter myself will be made to you. If I had not been, like Dogberry, a fellow with two gowns already, I should have jumped at it like a cock at a gooseberry. Ever yours most truly,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE 1st *September* [1813]

[*Owen D. Young*]

¹ In the quotation of this letter to his wife Southey has this word "*choice*," adding in brackets "this is not Scott's word, but I cannot decypher the right one."

² For "regular commemorations" Southey writes "biennial commemorations."

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

Sept. 2d, 1813

My temper is really worn to a hair's breadth. The intruder of yesterday hung on me till twelve to-day. When I had just taken my pen, he was relieved, like a sentry leaving guard, by two other lounging visitors ; and their post has now been supplied by some people on real business.¹

[*Lockhart*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

Monday Evening [about 2nd Sept. 1813]

OH James ! oh James ! Two Irish dames
Oppress me very sore ;
I groaning send one sheet I've penned—
For, hang them ! there's no more.

[*Lockhart*]

TO THOMAS SCOTT

[Extract]

[About 2nd Sept. 1813]

DEAR TOM,—I observe what you say as to Mr * * * * ; and as you may often be exposed to similar requests, which it would be difficult to parry, you can sign such letters of introduction as relate to persons whom you do not delight to honour short, *T. Scott* ; by which abridgment of your name I shall understand to limit my civilities.

[*Lockhart*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

MY DEAR LADY ABERCORN,—I trust this will find your tedious pilgrimage or rather your fatiguing march finally terminated at the Priory & that Lady Maria is not worse [?] for her journey. Our little trip was soon

¹ For this letter in full see vol. i. Appendix, p. 420.

ended and we got into all our cottage routine without any incident worth telling excepting that I have been surprized by an offer of the situation of poet laureate vacant by the death of Mr. Pye. This was very handsome on the part of the Prince Regent and I feel flattered accordingly. But there were many reasons against accepting the appointment and I have accordingly declined it with every expression of respect and gratitude. The necessity of writing odes twice a year is a difficulty which no one ought to encounter who has any poetical character to lose. At least I am sure I should find it insurmountable. The thing might be easily done in a decent sort of way as old Whitehead¹ himself describes it

Whose Muse obliged by sack and pension
Without a subject or invention
Must certain words in order set
As innocent as a Gazette
Must some half meaning half disguise
And utter neither truth nor lies.

But this mediocrity of performance is precisely what is most intolerable in poetry and I should neither have done justice to the Prince's judgment nor credit to my own had I accepted it without the hope of doing something better than making milk and water verses about the "natal day" and the "new-born year." When the office was offered to Gray it was offered as a sinecure and indeed I think it would become the Prince's good taste to abolish the absurd and ridiculous usage of compelling a poor devil to write bad verses twice a year by way of honouring the royal family and ministry for the time being, and untill this be done I think it will be difficult to get a man of real talent unless from the mere love of the salary to undertake the office—As for myself all I have to fear in the matter is that some busy misrepresenter may whisper in the

¹ William Whitehead (1715-85) succeeded Colley Cibber to the laureateship in 1757 after Gray had refused it. He was the son of a Cambridge baker. From Winchester School he obtained a scholarship at Clare Hall. He spent most of his life as tutor in the Earl of Jersey's family.

Regent's ear, that some Kensington House¹ partialities rendered me unwilling to accept an office in the Royal Household so handsomely offer'd by H. R. H.'s express direction. I trust however this will not be the case as I have stated frankly that any poetical efforts which may have attracted H. R. H.'s approbation have been free and spontaneous and that I fear to trammel myself with the regular discharge of a constant and recurring poetical commemoration—that I could not be exculpated if I accepted the situation so honourably tendered to me unless I was conscious of the power of approaching to such excellence as might vindicate the selection the prince had made—that besides I held professional appointments of some value and this seem'd to be one of the few things calculated to provide for some literary person who had no other adequate establishment or opening to fortune. All this I stated as civilly as I possibly could and I think the Prince who has both good sense and good taste will easily understand that there may be other reasons which cannot so well be written why I should reject the wreath "profaned by Cibber and contemn'd by Gray." If you my dearest friend hear the matter mentioned I hope you will not fail to dwell upon the pleasure I felt at being so distinguished in the P. R.'s opinion & the pain & embarrassment I experienced in rejecting an unsolicited mark of his favour. If you can put these, which are my real sentiments, in the way of going round they will have credit as coming from your Ladyship & I shall have the better chance of escaping what it is of importance I should escape, the risque namely of having my real motives misconstrued. If I were not afraid of overburthening the frank I would enclose a copy of my answer to the Lord Chamberlain.

Charlotte offers her respectful compliments to your Ladyship & I have the honour to present mine to the Marquis & the Ladies not forgetting my very pretty &

¹ The residence of the Princess of Wales.

interesting new acquaintance Lady Lucia [?] who is very like one of the best friends I have in this world. Believe me my dear Lady Abercorn with the truest respect very much your obliged & faithful

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 3 *Sept.* [1813]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO CHARLES CARPENTER

ABBOTSFORD *Sepr 3d* 1813

MY DEAR CARPENTER,—I have just got your letter of 10th of February & a fortnight before Charlotte received the valuable & much admired package of cottons and longcloths which she values still more as a pledge of Mrs. Carpenters regard & friendship. Our little girls will be all as fine as so many little Queens & Charlotte herself will feel no little pride & satisfaction in appearing in a dress which she owes to the kindness of so valued a relation. I observe Mrs. Carpenter finally purposes leaving India in October. I should like very much to be in England on her arrival & if possible I will certainly contrive it. We have two months vacation from 12 March to 12 May during which time I should think it likely Mrs. Carpenter will reach Britain & should she then think of coming North I will undertake to be her escort if she will accept me. Public news continue favorable ; the great victories of Lord Wellington in Spain & the determined powers of resistance exhibited by the Continental powers seem to augur a favorable termination of the war. Yet I think while Bonaparte lives & reigns peace is hardly to be hoped for. Sebastian one of his favourite Generals who knew his character well told a friend of mine that if Europe Asia & Africa were at Bonapartes feet he would be miserable until he had conquered America, and I do not think his spirit is of that kind which learns moderation from adversity otherwise his

disasters in Spain & Russia must have taught it. So we poor mortals must abide the course of events & drift down the stream making ourselves as happy as we can while we drive on. Our domestic news is limited to our being all well—the little people are much what I would wish them : very affectionate to each other & dutiful to us : they have all rather good parts & little Charles your name-son shews marks of genius which may perhaps turn to something remarkable. But as our Scotch proverb says “ It is long time to the saddling of a foal.” Upon the death of the Poet Laureate the Prince Regent was pleased of his unsolicited & most unexpected goodness to offer me the situation. But after a little consideration I declined the proposed honor as handsomely as I could : the emolument was not any very great object being under £200 a year & might I thought be better conferr’d on some literary person who was otherwise unprovided for. But besides I wish to be altogether independant of Kings and Courts though with every sentiment of loyalty to our own, and that would not have been easy had I taken a post in the household however small. So now I have only to hope that my humble excuse will be favourably received. Lord Minto has done great credit to himself by patronizing poor Leyden while alive & honouring his memory when no more : I looked forward to poor Johns return as one of the most pleasant events in futurity. But such dissapointments are the lot of humanity. I am delighted that you have met my dear Lady Hood who is a most charming woman. I hope Sir Samuel is in the way of increasing his fortune on your side of the world. I hope Mrs. Carpenter received a 4to-Volume from me forwarded by our friends Smith & Jenyns [?] in the beginning of the year. Charlotte writes at length to Mrs. Carpenter & sends you her affectionate love in which all our little folks join & believe me ever Dear Carpenter yours most affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

It has just occurred to me that it might be agreeable to you to have an introduction to Lord Moira your new Governor General, I therefore take the liberty to inclose a few lines for that purpose, having had the honor to know him pretty well while Commander in Chief in Scotland.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO THE MARQUIS OF HERTFORD, RAGLEY, WARWICKSHIRE

MY LORD,—I am this day honoured with your Lordship's letter of the 31st August, tendering for my acceptance the situation of poet laureate in the Royal Household. I shall always think it the highest honour of my life to have been the object of the good opinion implied in your Lordship's recommendation, and in the gracious acquiescence of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. I humbly trust I shall not forfeit sentiments so highly valued, although I find myself under the necessity of declining, with every acknowledgment of respect and gratitude, a situation above my deserts, and offered to me in a manner so highly flattering. The duties attached to the office of poet laureate are not indeed very formidable, if judged of by the manner in which they have sometimes been discharged. But an individual selected from the literary characters of Britain, upon the honourable principle expressed in your Lordship's letter, ought not, in justice to your Lordship, to his own reputation, but above all to his Royal Highness, to accept of the office, unless he were conscious of the power of filling it respectably, and attaining to excellence in the execution of the tasks which it imposes. This confidence I am so far from possessing, that, on the contrary, with all the advantages which do now, and I trust ever will, present themselves to the poet whose task it may be to commemorate the events of his Royal Highness's wise and successful administration, I am certain I should feel myself inadequate to

the fitting discharge of the regular and recurring duty of periodical composition, and should thus at once disappoint the expectation of the public, and, what would give me still more pain, discredit the nomination of his Royal Highness.

Will your Lordship permit me to add, that though far from being wealthy, I already hold two official situations in the line of my profession, which afford a respectable income. It becomes me, therefore, to avoid the appearance of engrossing one of the few appointments which seem specially adapted for the provision of those whose lives have been dedicated exclusively to literature, and who too often derive from their labours more credit than emolument.

Nothing could give me greater pain than being thought ungrateful to his Royal Highness's goodness, or insensible to the honourable distinction his undeserved condescension has been pleased to bestow upon me. I have to trust to your Lordship's kindness for laying at the feet of his Royal Highness, in the way most proper and respectful, my humble, grateful, and dutiful thanks, with these reasons for declining a situation which, though every way superior to my deserts, I should chiefly have valued as a mark of his Royal Highness's approbation and as entitling me to term myself an immediate Servant of His Majesty.

For your Lordship's unmerited goodness, as well as for the trouble you have had upon this occasion, I can only offer you my respectful thanks, and entreat that you will be pleased to believe me, my Lord Marquis, your Lordship's much obliged and much honoured humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE, 4th Sept. [1813]

[*Lockhart, corrected from draft in Scott's hand
in Walpole Collection*]

To REV. J. S. CLARKE ¹

[4th September 1813]

SIR,—On my return to this cottage after a short excursion I was at once surprized and deeply interested by the receipt of your letter. I shall always consider it as the proudest incident of my life that his Royal Highness the Prince Regent whose taste in literature is so highly distinguishd should have thought of naming me to the situation of Poet Laureate. I feel therefore no small embarrassment lest I should incur the suspicion of churlish ingratitude in declining an appointment in every point of view so far above my deserts but which I should chiefly have valued as conferrd by the unsolicited generosity of his Royal Highness and as entitling me the distinction of terming myself an immediate servant of his Majesty. But I have to trust to your goodness in representing to his R.H. with my most grateful humble and dutiful acknowledgments the circumstances² which compel me to decline the honor which his undeserved favour has proposed for me.

The poetical pieces I have hitherto composed have uniformly been the hasty production of impulses which I

¹ James Stanier Clarke (1765?-1834) took holy orders and became a chaplain in the navy. By Captain John Willett Payne he was introduced to the Prince of Wales, who appointed him his domestic chaplain and librarian. With Mr. J. McArthur, "a purser in the navy and secretary to Lord Hood of Toulon," he started the *Naval Chronicle*, a monthly magazine which ran for twenty years. In 1805 he took the LL.B. degree at Cambridge. He was a fellow of the Royal Society, was canon of Windsor, and was deputy clerk of the closet to the king. He had forwarded to Scott presentation copies of his successive publications: *The Progress of Maritime Discovery* (1803); *Falconer's Shipwreck*, with a life of the author (1804); *Naufragia, or Historical Memoirs of Shipwrecks* (1805); and the *Life of Lord Nelson* (in collaboration with Mr. McArthur) (1809). Besides these he edited Lord Clarendon's *Essays* (1815) and produced a *Life of King James II, from the Stuart MSS. in Carlton House* (1816).

This letter is from a copy in Lady Scott's handwriting, and with corrections here and there in Scott's hand. It was enclosed with the letter to the Duke of Buccleuch dated 3rd September. A draft in Scott's own hand is in the Walpole collection.

² "Reasons" in Scott's draft; "circumstances" struck out.

must term fortunate since they have attracted his Royal Highness's notice and approbation. But I strongly fear or rather am absolutely certain that I should feel myself unable to justify in the eye of the public the choice of his Royal Highness by a fitting discharge of the duties of an office which requires stated and periodical exertion. And although I am conscious how much this difficulty is lessened under the government of his R.H. marked by paternal wisdom at home and by such successes abroad as seem to promise the liberation of Europe I still feel that the necessity of a regular commemoration would trammel my powers of composition at the very time when it would be equally my pride and duty to tax them to the uttermost.

There is another circumstance which weighs deeply in my mind while forming my present resolution. I have already the honor to hold two appointments under government not usually conjoined and which afford an income far indeed from wealth but amounting to decent independence. I fear therefore that in accepting one of the few situations which our establishment holds forth as the peculiar provision of literary men I might be justly censured as availing myself of his R. Highness's partiality to engross more than my share of the public revenue to the prejudice of competitors equally meritorious at least and otherwise unprovided for. And as this calculation will be made by thousands who know that I have reaped great advantages by the favour of the public without being aware of the losses which it has been my misfortune to sustain I may fairly reckon that it will terminate even more to my prejudice than if they had the means of judging accurately of my real circumstances.

I have thus Sir frankly exposed to you for his Royal Highness's favourable consideration the feelings which induce me to decline an appointment offered in a manner so highly calculated to gratify I will not say my vanity only but my sincere feelings of devoted attachment to

the crown and constitution of my Country and to the person of his Royal Highness by whom its government has been so worthily and successfully administered and to whom I have been indebted for such flattering personal notice.

No consideration on earth would give me so much pain as the idea of my real feelings being misconstrued on this occasion or that I should be supposed stupid enough not to estimate the value of his Royal Highness's favour or so ungrateful as not to feel it as I ought. And you will relieve me from great anxiety if you will have the goodness to let me know if his Royal Highness is pleased to receive favourably my humble and grateful apology for declining a favour so little merited.

I cannot conclude without expressing my sense of your kindness and of the trouble you have had upon this account and I request you will believe me Sir your obliged humble Servant

[WALTER SCOTT]

Rev. Mr. J. S. Clarke &c.

[*Buccleuch*]

TO CHARLES, DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

MY DEAR LORD DUKE,—Good advice is easily followed when it jumps with our own sentiments & inclinations. I no sooner found mine fortified by your Graces opinion than I wrote Lord Hertford declining the laurel in the most civil way I could imagine. I also wrote the Princes librarian who had made himself active on the occasion detailing at somewhat more length than I thought respectful to the Lord Chamberlain my reasons for declining the intended honour. My wife has made a copy of the last letter which I enclose for your Graces perusal—there is no occasion either to preserve or return it—but I am desirous you should know what I have put my apology upon for I may reckon on its being misrepresented

—I certainly should never have survived the recitative described by your Grace—it is a part of the etiquette I was quite unprepared for & should have sunk under it.

It is curious enough that Drumlanrig¹ should always have been the refuge of bards who decline court promotion—Gay I think refused to be a gentleman usher or some such post²—& I am determined to abide by my post of Grand Ecuyer Tranchant [*sic*, *Lockhart corrects*] of the Chateau varied for that of tale-teller of an evening. In order to qualify myself for this latter post I have been arranging a sort of Border fragment on the deliverance of Kinmont Willie not for publication but merely for the amusement of the Clan. Lord Queensberry has some information on the history or at least the birth & parentage of the said Kinmont Willie which I should be glad to possess if his Lordship would have the kindness to mark it down. I have the better title to hope for his giving himself this trouble because Lady Marchioness (being induced thereto by a bribe of honey-comb) once engaged me with a dramatic clergyman who insisted I should either like his tragedy or tell him at length why I disapproved of it—a dilemma from which I escaped with great difficulty.

There is no news here excepting that all the world is in admiration at the liberality of Lord Melgund who has actually presented the Sheriff Clerk of Roxburghshire with 5 guineas for making up his return—Yet the insatiable man of pen & ink pretends that it is only one fifth part of his legal fee & that the extravagant Laird of Edgerstane (?) always added a cypher to that same figure 5 when he settled with him on former occasions. Who after this will pretend to satisfy a scribe? We are quietly mustering for the Head Court for fear of

¹ “Drumlanrig . . . which has descended by the death of the late Duke of Queensberry to the Duke of Buccleuch.” See letter to Joanna Baillie, 12th September 1813.

² “Poor Gay . . . was insulted, on the accession of George II., by the offer of a gentleman ushership to one of the royal infants.”—LOCKHART.

any advantage: I think we are now about neck & neck.

I will send your Grace a Copy of the letter of guarantee when I receive it from London. By an arrangement with Longman & Co. the great booksellers in Pater Noster Row I am about to be enabled to place their security as well as my own between your Grace & the possibility of hazard. But your kind readiness to forward a transaction which is of such great importance both to my fortune & comfort can never be forgotten although it can scarce make me more than I have always been my Lord Duke your Grace's much obliged & truly faithful

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 3d¹ Sept. 1813

[*Buccleuch*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR SIR,—I must not let a post pass without acknowledging the Receipt of the Bill for £500 which will do me Yeomans service and shall be duly replaced. The date suits me perfectly and the contents cum omni sequela as the Civilians say shall be made forthcoming in four or six months at the furthest, which I hope will suit your purchase of Irish soil. Many thanks to you for the accomodation which the sudden & most unexpected narrowing of our discounts here renders very convenient. I have some news which will surprize you. I have been offered the Laurel (vacant by the death of Mr. Pye) in the most flattering manner by the Prince Regent, but what will not surprize you I have declined it with every expression of grateful respect. The duty of the office recurs with such formal regularity that it would be impossible to discharge it with any thing like credit, and tho I care not if my poetical reputation were to die a natural death or be slain by fair criticism yet I would not

¹ Scott seems to have made a slip in the dating of this letter. He has written to Lord Hertford and Mr. Clarke on the 4th, so this letter is more likely to have been written on the 5th, which is the date in Lockhart's version. The 3d Sept. is as Scott has written in the MS.

willingly be Felo de se. Moreover I cannot think of engrossing the opening for some Literary man who may need the situation so much more than myself, and besides I have an objection to being in any degree dependant upon the Court. Your Household troops are expected to move upon the word of Command, and some occasion might occur when I should be refractory and would then be cashiered with a very great laugh against me. At the same time I was a little puzzled how to word the rejection of a proposal so kindly intended and couched in such flattering Language. But after all as old Barbour says, "Ah, Freedom is a glorious thing"—I will be happy to see your tale tho it will be too late for this Register, but what will you make of Blue bell Castle, it sounds very like one of those Castle[s] which the Knight of La Mancha discovered where his less quick sighted Squire could only see Inns.—I will take the utmost care of the Charters. Constable has been here and talks of retarding the publication of Swift until January which will be a great indulgence to me.¹ Whenever I write down Kinmont Willie you shall have a copy. In fact I think I shall print half a doz to save transcript but I have not thought of it since I wrote to you. My brother Toms sudden journey is very distressing especially as his wife is on the point of being confined, but such is the lot of those who follow the kind of life into which he has been thrown.² If he had wintered in Dublin I would have introduced you to him as he is one of the most pleasant companions you ever met with. All our little folks are well and the quiet of Abbotsford disturbed by nothing except an invasion of the Harden family. I daresay Sir J. Stevensons music will do honor to the words of Rokeby. I am no stranger to his powers of composition. I wish you every happiness on your Killarney expedition & am most truly yours
W SCOTT

¹ Not published, however, till after middle of July 1814. See letter to Hartstonge, p. 464.

² See note to letter to Mrs. Scott, p. 354.

Ps. Dr. Hill may rely on my rummaging out every particular about Patrick—so soon as I get to Edinburgh, or sooner if I can. I have just learned by a letter from my brother that my sister in law is like to be left in Cork, in the family way and expecting to be confined—her situation will be very forlorn and if you can reccomend [*sic*] her to any friends of yours for a little counsel and countenance it will be an inestimable favor. The address will be to Mrs. Scott (Lady of Thomas Scott, Esqr. paymaster 70th Reg.) but where she may be lodged I cannot even guess—their fate is a cruel hard one.

ABBOTSFORD 4th Sept. 1813.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT, ROKEBY, GRETA BRIDGE, YORKSHIRE

MY DEAR MORRITT,—Your last letter though far from being altogether what I could have wishd considerably relieved us on the score of Mrs. Morritts health. We will be cautious to make no report concerning it that by coming round might be prejudicial to her nerves shaken as they must be by this violent attack. I am told the great safety in Mrs. Morritts complaint is never to struggle agt. it but instantly take to bed and assist nature as much as possible to throw out the inflammation. Let us hope and trust that health so precious to you and so dear to all her friends will be confirmd by time caution and the mildness of a better climate.

Our journey here was of course not the pleasantest considering the state in which we left Mrs. Morritts health. And on taking up our usual occupations my quiet has been disturbd by the offer of the laurel—nothing less if you please. The matter was very handsomely meant by the Prince Regent and as handsomely expressd and I was somewhat puzzled how to avoid the ungracious appearance of flinging an intended favour back in the donors face. But it was impossible to think

of being laureate. A sort of ridicule has always attached to the character and Horace himself could not have made the regular duty of the office decently respectable. Besides the country has done its part by me and this appointment seems rather to belong to some one who has dedicated his time to literature independant of every other profession—Last of all a place in the household is a sort of tie on votes and political conduct and no man ought to pledge himself on these matters since ministers might be changed and then the Ex-laureate which I should probably soon be would make rather an absurd figure. So I transmitted my *nolo* in the civillest terms I could devise and I think you will approve of my having done so.

I am much more flatterd with Marshal Beresfords¹ approbation than with that of principalities and powers. I have a natural love for a soldier which would have been the mode of life I would have chosen in preference to all others but for my lameness. And yet I made the discovery a good many years since that I should have been but an indifferent soldier. The essence of military skill rests upon mathematical principle combined with an accurate estimate of the moral and physical faculties of your own troops and those who are opposed to you. The most simple and effectual mode of bringing a given number of men to a certain point at a certain moment is a singularly dry study and yet it comprehends the grand principle of military tactics. So I am well contented to look at war poetically and to give it all the cast of chivalry and romance which in fact is a mere appendage to the reality like the red-coats standards and kettle-drums. But my interest remains unabated in those who have fought the good fight and to Marshal Beresford I think we owe the splendid example of a regenerated people. The dry bones have been warmd into life under

¹ Morritt had repeated a message from "my old & tried friend Marshal Beresford," who has been reading *Rokeby* and wishes his acknowledgment conveyed to Scott for his flattering reference to him in a previous work, i.e. *Don Roderick*. William Carr Beresford, Viscount Beresford (1768-1854).

his admirable management and I trust he will be spared to enjoy those honours which are due to his labours and hazards of every description. The meeting at Rokeby will be indeed a joyous one and happy shall I be when it takes place.

I have nothing to add except that we are getting in our harvest under more favourable auspices than are remembered by the oldest people here. An old grumbletonian farmer in my neighbourhood allowed upon my close interrogation that "it must be owned the weather was no that bad" which is a point nearer the admission of a good crop and season than he was ever known to approach.—Mrs. Scott sends kindest remembrances to Mrs. Morritt and I am ever most truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 4 *Sept.* [1813]

[*Law*]

[*To UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT*]

DEAR SIR,—Your obliging letter reached me only this day being left by Colonel Hawkshaw at my house in Castle Street. As I do not know what his motions may be I beg you will say to him if you have an opportunity that I am stationary at this cottage till November & though it is so *mere* a cottage that I cannot offer him even the hospitality of a bed I will hope for the pleasure of seeing him should his curiosity lead him to visit the ruins of Melrose which are in my immediate vicinity. And should he spend any part of the winter in Edinr. I will be happy to shew him any attention in my power. I am much obliged to you for resuming our old acquaintance & most particularly so for the attention you were so good as to pay my brother in passing through Donahadee & I beg you will believe me Dear Sir Your obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD NEAR MELROSE 5 *Sept.* 1813

[*Henry Guppy*]

TO MESSRS. LONGMAN

MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Constable was here on Friday last for the purpose of adjusting a plan for giving you and him the arrangement of such of my copy-rights as are now in my person and which he promised to submit to you at full length. If it should happen to be agreeable to your wishes and interest I shall be very well pleased and do not now write with the purpose of entering into any discussion upon it but merely at Mr. Constable's request for the purpose of sanctioning his proposal. I hope the arrangement may be completed in time to meet your acceptance of £500 due in the end of this month, otherwise I must be indebted to your indulgence for a short renewal and shall remit you the funds which it produces to meet the original draft. I am prepared for the last Draft at 6 months but you will recollect I mentioned I was uncertain if I should be in cash to meet the first.

The Laurel has been offered me in the most flattering manner by H.R.H. the Prince Regent but I did not feel justified in snatching at one of the few situations of emolument open to those who have made literature their exclusive profession. I felt the compliment however as I ought to do. I am Gentlemen Your most obedt. Servt.

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 5 *September* 1813.

[*Owen D. Young*]

TO MRS. WALTER SCOTT

at Mr. Scott of Reaburns, Lessudden St. Boswells.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I found a letter from Tom on my return here of the same date as yours & to the same purpose. I have written to him offering all assistance in cash &c that could make this unexpected order more

easy¹ but I have not yet heard in reply. As you are so close in our neighbourhood I hope you dont intend to cheat us of a visit. The girls' room is to be empty for a few days after Wednesday & Peter² will attend you on any day you please and either return with you to Lessudden or set you forth on your return home whichever you please. We were very sorry for poor Daniel Russell & for the distressing effects it will have on his sisters.

I have no news to send you except that the Prince has in the most handsome manner & of his own free motion offerd me the vacant situation of Poet Laureate which I have declined with every feeling and expression of respect & gratitude. My reasons for doing so I will reserve till we meet only in general I was convinced I should have lost credit by the necessity of writing birth day odes & so forth & after all could not reconcile myself to a situation which obliged me officially to praise the Court twice a year whether I thought they deserved it or no. To have had it in my power is however a very flattering compliment. Mrs. Anne Keith is at Yair and dines with us on Tuesday. She is as lively as a lark and like you a great traveller. Charlotte joins in best and most affectionate duty & in begging you will not pass our cottage as there is really no excuse from want of room. We are very sorry we cannot come for you ourselves but I will send down Walter if you wish to have a beau. Believe me my dear Mother Your affectionate & dutiful Son

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 5th Sept. [1813]

[Law]

¹ Tom's regiment, stationed at Cork, was suddenly ordered to Canada. He had to leave his wife expecting her confinement, and Scott wrote to Lord Forbes, Hartstonge and others to befriend her. Lord Forbes in reply recalls "the friendship that subsisted between his father and mine & my frequent visits, when a High School boy, in George's Square." Viscount Forbes (also Baron Granard), b. 1760, was temporarily superintending "the military arrangements of this country until the arrival of General Hewett who is appointed to succeed Sir John Hope."

² Scott's coachman, Peter Mathieson, brother-in-law to Tom Purdie.

To JOHN BALLANTYNE

[Extract]

5th September 1813

FOR God's sake look forward—how your own funds, and those provided in London, will come in to extinguish debts ; and remember *mine* must be paid as well as yours. You know I cannot calculate how or when your bills will be discounted, though you can by taking the worst view. It is comparatively easy to provide for a difficulty seen at the distance of months, but who can trust to doing so at the warning of days and hours ? Do take a well-digested view of this matter, upon a broad and extensive plan.¹

[*Ballantyne-Humbug Handled*]

To JOANNA BAILLIE

MY DEAR MISS BAILLIE, I have been a vile lazy correspondent having been strolling about the country and indeed a little way into England for the greater part of July and August, in short “aye skipping here and there” like the Tanner of Tamworths horse.² Since I returnd I have had a gracious offer of the laurel on the part of the P. R. You will not wonder that I have declined it though with every expression of gratitude which such an unexpected compliment demanded. Indeed it would be high imprudence in one having literary reputation to maintain to accept of an offer which obliged him to produce a poetical exercise on a

¹ For full version of this letter see Vol. I, Appendix, p. 446.

² “The Tanner of Tamworth who mistook Edward IV. for a highway-man. After some little altercation, they changed horses, the king giving his hunter for the tanner's cob worth about four shillings ; but as soon as the tanner mounted the king's horse, it threw him, and the tanner gladly paid down a sum of money to get his old cob back again. King Edward now blew his hunting-horn, and the courtiers gathered round him. ‘I *hope* [i.e. *expect*] I shall be hanged for this,’ cried the tanner ; but the king, in merry pin, gave him the manor of Plumpton Park, with 300 marks a year.”—Percy : *Reliques*, etc.

given theme twice a year and besides as my loyalty to the royal family is very sincere I would not wish to have it thought mercenary. The public has done its part by me very well and so has government and I think this little literary provision ought to be bestowed on one who has made literature his sole profession. If the Regent means to make it respectable he will abolish the foolish custom of the annual odes which is a drudgery no person of talent could ever willingly encounter—or come clear off from if he was so rash. And so peace be with the laurel “profaned by Cibber and contemnd by Gray.”

I was for a fortnight at Drumlanrig a grand old chateau which has descended by the death of the late D. of Queensberry to the D. of Buccleuch. It is really a most magnificent pile and when embosomd amid the wide forest scenery of which I have an infantine recollection must have been very romantic. But old Q. made wide devastation among the noble trees although some fine ones are still left and a quantity of young shoots are in despite of the want of every kind of attention rushing up to supply the places of the fathers of the forest from whose stems they are springing. It will now I trust be in better hands for the reparation of the castle goes hand in hand with the rebuilding of all the cottages in which an aged race of dependents pensioners of Duke Charles and his wife Priors “Kitty, blooming young and gay” have during the last reign been pining into rheumatisms and agues, in neglected poverty. All this is beautiful to witness. The inn-doors [*sic*] work does not please me quite so well though I am aware that to those who are to inhabit an old castle it becomes often a matter of necessity to make alterations by which its tone and character are changed for the worse. Thus a noble gallery which ran the whole length of the front is converted into bedrooms very comfortable indeed but not quite so magnificent. And as grim a dungeon as ever

knave or honest man was confined in is in some danger of being converted into a wine-cellar. It is almost impossible to draw your breath when you recollect that this hole so many feet under ground and totally bereft of air and light was built for the imprisonment of human beings whether guilty suspected or merely unfortunate.¹ Certainly if our frames are not so hardy our hearts too are softer than those of our forbathers although probably a few years of domestic war or feudal oppression would bring us back to the same case-hardening both in body and sentiment.

I meant to have gone to Rokeby but was prevented by Mrs. Morritt being unwell which I very much regret as I know few people that deserve better health. I am very glad you have known them and I pray you to keep the acquaintance in winter.—I am glad to see by this days paper that our friend Terry has made a favourable impression on his first appearance at Covent Garden.² He has got a very good engagement there for 3 years at £12, 12, a week, which is a handsome income. This little place comes on as fast as can be reasonably hoped and the pinasters are all above the ground but cannot be planted out for twelve months. My kindest compliments in which Mrs. Scott joins always attend Miss Baillie the Dr and his family. Ever my dear friend Yours most faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 12 *Sept.* [1813]

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London, and Lockhart*]

¹ Among the episodes in Drumlanrig's history are its pillage by the English under Lord Wharton (1549); an entertainment given at it to James VI. (1617); and its capture by the Parliamentarians (1650).

² "On 8 Sept. 1813, as Leon in *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, Terry made his first appearance at Covent Garden, where, except for frequent migrations to Edinburgh and summer seasons at the Haymarket, he remained until 1822."—*D.N.B.*

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE, BOOKSELLER, EDINR.¹

DEAR CONSTABLE,—I have your letter and one to the same effect from Messrs. Longman. All I can say of the matter is that if they do not come handsomely forward we must look else where for London publishers and such may I should think be found. But as they can hardly be said to run any great risque I think it likely that Longman and Co/ may come in. I shall be greatly obliged to you to let me know when Rees comes to town. I will probably have a visit from him. Yours truly

ABBOTSFORD 14 Sept. [1813]

W. SCOTT

[*Kilpatrick*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter & much obliged by your exertions. The terms of the annuity are too hard (if I understand them) to be resorted to if I can do better but we will keep them in view. If Longman & Co decline I shall then resort to Caddell & Davies who have unsolicited made application to James Ballantyne about the copy rights to which of course he gave no

¹ Constable had written to Longmans on the 4th September offering a half-share in *The Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, and the new poem in preparation as security for bills to the amount of £3500, which are to be deposited with Brooks & Co. as security for the loan, for which the Duke of Buccleuch is collateral security. See earlier note. Longmans replied on the 9th announcing Mr. Rees' visit to Edinburgh, who will decide what to do. They have heard from Scott and written him to the same effect. On the 25th Constable reports to Scott his conversation with Rees. It is clear "they are very anxious not to increase their engagements at present from their very heavy stock and in case of a refusal my Partner and self since yesterday have been in cogitation how money can be had independently of the London Account altogether. . . . We find that £3000 or even £5000 can be had immediately on what is called a redeemable annuity on a Bond by yourself & the Duke of Buccleugh, that is a Bond for the regular payment of the Annuity which for £5000 would be from five to six Hundred a year—the Bond redeemable on paying 6 mos annuity in advance at any time . . . a most snug way of getting hold of the Cash." This explains this letter and the next.

answer. Their bills would answer as well as Longmans with the London Bankers & my only anxiety would be to secure you my good friend any interest in the transaction you might think suited your funds & views for of course if they bought or took in pledge the present copy-rights it would be with a view to the Lord of the Isles & I think you would like ill to be cut out there which would also be a shabby return for your exertions. I have desired Ja. Ballantyne to sound Davies upon the price &c he would give for the copy-rights but to conclude nothing till we had Rees's final answer. I should greatly prefer an arrangement with Longman & I think I will venture to prophecy that if they let the thing slip just now they will repent it hereafter. James B. will communicate with you.

Yours in haste
W SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 28 *Sept.* 1813

[*Stevenson*]

TO JOHN RICHARDSON

[*September-October 1813*]

MY DEAR RICHARDSON,—I have owed you a letter this long time, but perhaps my debt might not yet be discharged, had I not a little matter of business to trouble you with.¹ I wish you to lay before the King's counsel, or Sir Samuel Romilly and any other you may approve, the point whether a copyright, being sold for the term during which Queen Anne's act warranted the property to the author, the price is liable in payment of the property-tax. I contend it is not so liable, for the following reasons:—*1st*, It is a patent right, expected to produce an annual, or at least an incidental profit, during the currency of many years; and surely it was never contended that if a man sold a theatrical patent, or a patent for machinery,

¹ "During this autumn of 1813 a demand was made on him [Scott] by the commissioners of the income-tax to return in one of their schedules an account of the profits of his literary exertions during the last three years."
—LOCKHART.

property-tax should be levied in the first place on the full price as paid to the seller, and then on the profits as purchased by the buyer. I am not very expert at figures, but I think it clear that a double taxation takes place. 2^d, It should be considered that a book may be the work not of one year, but of a man's whole life ; and as it has been found, in a late case of the Duke of Gordon, that a fall of timber was not subject to property-tax because it comprehended the produce of thirty years, it seems at least equally fair that mental exertions should not be subjected to a harder principle of measurement. 3^d, The demand is, so far as I can learn, totally new and unheard of. 4th, Supposing that I died and left my manuscripts to be sold publicly along with the rest of my library, is there any ground for taxing what might be received for the written book, any more than any rare printed book, which a speculative bookseller might purchase with a view to republication ? You will know whether any of these things ought to be suggested in the brief. David Hume, and every lawyer here whom I have spoken to, consider the demand as illegal.¹ Believe me truly yours,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

[Copy]

CASE.

A. B. is an author of several eminent literary works for the Copy right of each, of which he receives a considerable sum from his Bookseller. On being called upon by the Assessor under the Property Tax Act for a return of the profits so received by him, he declines, on the ground, that these are

¹ "Mr. Richardson having prepared a case, obtained upon it the opinions of Mr. Alexander (afterwards Sir William Alexander and Chief Baron of the Exchequer) and of the late Sir Samuel Romilly. These eminent lawyers agreed in the view of their Scotch brethren ; and after a tedious correspondence, the Lords of the Treasury at last decided that the Income-Tax Commissioners should abandon their claim upon the produce of literary labour."—LOCKHART.

not annual profits within the meaning of the Act, but must be considered in the same light as the purchase money arising from the sale of an Estate or any other property ; he further adds that sums received by him in this way being immediately invested in the purchase of Land or laid out at interest, the Annual rents thereof become chargeable of course from the ordinary operation of the Property tax Act, and that the profits arising from the publication of his works are included in the Publishers general return of Profits under Schedule D.

The Assessor answers, that the valuable considerations received by him for the copy right of his works as above mentioned is a profit accruing to him for the year it is received, and falls under the description of Profits of an uncertain annual value directed to be brought under charge by the first rule of the third case of Schedule D or the nature of undscribed profits chargeable under the sixth case of Schedule D.

The Commissioners of Property Tax for the County of Edinburgh therefore request the opinion of the Board on the subject, and wish to be informed of the English practice in like cases.

The Board think that the opinion given by the Assessor forms the true construction of the Act as applied to this subject.

By Order of the Commissioners of Property tax for the County of Edinburgh, the inclosed case and opinion by the Board of Taxes is handed Mr. Scott for his perusal ; and they require that he within 21 Days from this date make a return of his profits from Publications, during the years, from April 1811 to April 1812 and from April 1812 to April 1813.

COUNTY TAX OFFICE 429 LAWN MARKET

HEAD OF BANK STREET 9th Octr. 1813

[*Stevenson*]

TO INCOME TAX ASSESSOR

[Copy]

SIR,—I am favoured with your intimation and as my own opinion is strengthened by that of every lawyer to whom I have mentioned the circumstance I certainly cannot defer even to the respectable opinion expressed in your enclosure especially as no preceedent whatever is

alleged. I should therefore feel it my duty to resist this demand, as far as the right of appeal secured by this Act will give me leave. But it is my misfortune at present to have no interest in doing so whatever. The distress which commercial circumstances have brought on the bookselling trade has been so great that after I had received bills for £3000, for the price of Rokeby which is the only return I have to make within the period requested by you, I have had to repay every farthing of it, and a great deal more the Acceptors being for the time unable to retire their bills—this circumstance has taken place since I last communicated with you and I refer you for establishment of the fact which I should wish to remain as private as possible to Messrs. Ballantyne & Co and to Mr. Constable who can establish to your satisfaction that I have realized no profit whatever during the period alluded to. I think it necessary to add that I shall lay a case before the Crown Council in England which I have no objection to subject to your revision in order to obtain the best guide for my future regulation—I think literary *Property* so denominated in the Statute of Queen Anne by which it is created, be not *Property* but *Income* the description has been very ill chosen by the legislature. I shall be in Town in the month of November (by the 12th) and will then wait upon you mean while you will be furnished with the means of convincing yourself that I am at least at present in danger of being a great loser instead of a gainer by my publications. I Am Sir Your most obt.

[signed] W SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 12 October 1813

To the Assessor To the Commissioners of the
Income Tax for the County of Edinr.

[Stevenson]

To JOHN BALLANTYNE

[Copy]

HIGH STREET, *Saturday 15 October 1813*

DEAR SIR,—I have read the enclosed paper with much attention—and I am quite of Mr. Scott's Opinion as to the mode in which Copy Money for a Literary Work should fall to be Taxed by the assessor—indeed I had lately an opportunity of expressing my sentiments on the Subject of the returns to Authors from their Work to one of the Gentlemen of the Tax Department—in words almost similar to those which Mr. Scott has used in his letter—and it occurs to me that it is the ground alone on which Mr. Scott should resist the assessment. I am very decidedly of opinion that the letter addressed to the Assessor ought on no account to be delivered—the unqualified discredit it throws on the Trade of Bookselling might have the worst possible effects & appear to me quite unnecessary—were Mr. Scott in Town I have no doubt but a little conversation would satisfy him of the Propriety of this Suggestion—It is very well known that there are several publishers of Mr. Scotts Works—And there should be nothing done that can be avoided tending to lessen their Mercantile respectability—and this I need not tell you is the more necessary under present circumstances. Believe me Dear Sir Yours sincerely

[ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE]

[*Stevenson*]

To ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I regret to learn from J. Ballantyne that there is great danger of your exertions in our favour which once promised so fairly proving finally abortive or at least being too tardy in their operation to work out our relief. In this crisis I am of course coming to town & I would be very glad to converse with you in Castle Street as most convenient either on Sunday evening or Monday morning at ten o'clock. If any thing can be honorably

& properly done to avert a most unpleasant shock I shall be most willing to do it and if not Gods will be done. There will be enough of property including my private fortune to pay every claim and I have not used prosperity so ill as greatly to fear adversity. But those things we will talk over at meeting meanwhile believe me with a sincere sense of your kindness & friendly views very truly
Yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 16 *October* [1813]

Mr. Constable Bookseller
High Street Edinr.

[*Stevenson*]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

ABBOTSFORD 19th *October* 1813

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,—I could not well answer your letter¹ till I saw the Ballantynes and was only in Edinr. yesterday for one day. I find from a letter which you wrote to James and his own ideas on the subject that there

¹ A letter from Southey of the 31st August which must have given Scott some pain. In engaging Southey to write for the *Register* the history of the year John Ballantyne had offered as a bonus, beyond the payment for the history, one-twelfth share of £209, and intimated that the profit on the first two volumes had been £80. A little later he had announced the intention of J. B. & Co. "to sell for them the shares of the other literary proprietors & to grant them a Bill for the profits arising at twelve months after the publication of each volume . . . the profits upon each twelfth of the Register for 1808 amounts to £80 for which sum, if it is agreeable to you that we shall sell your proportion of the books, we shall presently grant you our bill." Apparently the bill had never come, and after repeated evasions John is now withholding what is due for "my contributions to the fourth volume upon the plea that there has been a loss upon my twelfth share," but Southey had been given the share as a bonus, not as a speculation. "I am morally and legally entitled to £80 profit upon the first volume as clearly as if I had his note for the sum & tho I am content to look for no profit upon the second and third volume owing to their increased bulk I am not & cannot be liable to any loss upon them consequent upon want of sale." John will not answer and "I know not how much longer he intends to shuffle off the settlement for I will not conceal from you that from every quarter I hear equally well of his brother & ill of him."

could be no occasion for my interference as your ideas seem to meet each other very nearly. Although not without their share in the losses of this hard time I am convinced you will find the equitable treatment you are so well entitled to expect and no exertion of any influence I can use with them shall be a wanting if necessary. I have had dreadfully long accts. to settle with them myself for *entre nous* the trade is every where stagnated for the period. It is however what I have long foreseen for the multiplication of bad books which never reached the public at all but were merely bartered to & fro among the booksellers (the one giving his lead shilling for the other's Birmingham half pence) created a sort of paper credit of a very lumbering weight which was indeed the sign of value but had none of its efficacy—"We of the right hand file" of authorship feel immediate inconvenience from this but it will rather serve us in the end for the ultimate loss upon bad articles of trade must enhance the value of those which are saleable & when the booksellers have gathered their feet a little they will learn it is to be presumed that they had better pay well for a saleable article than waste print & paper on one which is never to circulate but from warehouse to warehouse—So much for the shop—And now for the laurel—Why how now, are you crowned or are you not—the papers have long named you but I have not seen you in the Gazette. You will have the credit I think of reviving the lustre which Dryden once cast on the office when there did reign an English monarch who with all his moral & political profligacy did interest himself in English literature.

Nothing gave me more pleasure than finding you at home even for the few hours I could spend at Keswick¹ but I hope on some other occasion to see you when there

¹ "You took me by surprise at Keswick when my house had not recovered the disorganisation into which Death had thrown it—but it mortified me that you should be in a lodging & I shall not lose a certain feeling of discomfort upon that score till you Mrs Scott & your daughter have given us days enough to show you anything round us."—SOUTHEY, 31st August.

is nothing in any degree to overcloud our meeting. Perhaps this may be in London next spring for I have some thoughts of taking a little frisk in the Metropolis if circumstances will allow me.— What an eventful year this has been ! and for what new events are we yet to look—I like Lord Wellington's advance.¹ The French ought to feel to the core the sort of misery it has been their sport to inflict upon invaded countries. It is the law of retribution the most natural & equitable and which has in all similar instances had the happy effect of awakening nations from their selfish dreams of vain glory—" O war to those who never tried thee sweet"—It is one thing to read in the *Moniteur* the distresses of a distant army—another to see a conqueror advancing into their frontier provinces. Edward the Black Prince was I believe the last English general who predominated in Gascony and the omen is a good one. Adieu, dear Southey, Ever yours

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO DANIEL TERRY

ABBOTSFORD, 20th October 1813

DEAR TERRY,—You will easily believe that I was greatly pleased to hear from you. I had already learned from *The Courier* (what I had anticipated too strongly to doubt for one instant) your favourable impression on the London public. I think nothing can be more judicious in the managers than to exercise the various powers you possess, in their various extents. A man of genius is apt to be limited to one single style, and to become per force a mannerist, merely because the public is not so just to its own amusement as to give him an

¹ The sieges of San Sebastian and Pampeluna. San Sebastian "was finally stormed on August 31 . . . Pampeluna fell on October 31 . . . Wellington's entry into France was delayed for four months."—*Cambridge Mod. Hist.*, ix, 480.

opportunity of throwing himself into different lines ; and doubtless the exercise of our talents in one unvaried course, by degrees renders them incapable of any other, as the over use of any one limb of our body gradually impoverishes the rest. I shall be anxious to hear that you have played *Malvolio*, which is, I think, one of your *coups-de-mâitre*, and in which envy itself cannot affect to trace an imitation. That same charge of imitation, by the way, is one of the surest scents upon which dunces are certain to open. Undoubtedly, if the same character is well performed by two individuals, their acting must bear a general resemblance—it could not be well performed by both were it otherwise. But this general resemblance, which arises from both following nature and their author, can as little be termed imitation as the river in Wales can be identified with that of Macedon. Never mind these dunderheads, but go on your own way, and scorn to laugh on the right side of your mouth, to make a difference from some ancient comedian who, in the same part, always laughed on the left. Stick to the public—be uniform in your exertions to study even those characters which have little in them, and to give a grace which you cannot find in the author. Audiences are always grateful for this—or rather—for gratitude is as much out of the question in the Theatre, as Bernadotte says to Boney it is amongst sovereigns—or rather, the audience is gratified by receiving pleasure from a part which they had no expectation would afford them any. It is in this view that, had I been of your profession, and possessed talents, I think I should have liked often those parts with which my brethren quarrelled, and studied to give them an effect which their intrinsic merit did not entitle them to. I have some thoughts of being in town in spring (not resolutions by any means) ; and it will be an additional motive to witness your success, and to find you as comfortably established as your friends in Castle Street earnestly hope and trust you will be.

The summer—an uncommon summer in beauty and serenity—has glided away from us at Abbotsford, amidst our usual petty cares and petty pleasures. The children's garden is in apple-pie order, our own completely cropped and stocked, and all the trees flourishing like the green bay of the Psalmist. I have been so busy about our domestic arrangements, that I have not killed six hares this season. Besides, I have got a cargo of old armour, sufficient to excite a suspicion that I intend to mount a squadron of cuirassiers. I only want a place for my armoury ; and, thank God, I can wait for that, these being no times for building. And this brings me to the loss of poor Stark,¹ with whom more genius has died than is left behind among the collected universality of Scottish architects. O Lord !—but what does it signify ?—Earth was born to bear, and man to pay (that is, lords, nabobs, Glasgow traders, and those who have wherewithal)—so wherefore grumble at great castles and cottages, with which the taste of the latter contrives to load the back of Mother Terra ?—I have no hobby-horsical commissions at present, unless if you meet the *Voyages of Captain Richard*, or *Robert Falconer*,² in one volume—“ cow-heel,

¹ William Stark, “ the best modern architect that Scotland had produced. After he had established his reputation at Glasgow and other places, bad health compelled him to seek a retreat in Edinburgh, where however he only survived till October 1813. Thus he was too young to have done much ; but he had excited attention and given good principles, particularly in reference to the composition of towns.”—Cockburn's *Memorials of his Time*, 249. After his preliminary schemes of the building of Abbotsford, “ Sir Walter lost no time in planning his future residence, and begged Mr. Stark to give him a design for an ornamental cottage in the style of the old English vicarage house. But before his wishes could be met, Mr. Stark died, and his building plans, checked for a time, expanded by degrees.”—Hon. Mrs. MAXWELL SCOTT, *The Making of Abbotsford*. As we shall see, he informs Terry, in the letter of 10th November 1814 : “ I have been obliged to relinquish Stark's plan, which was greatly too expensive.” Two years later, again to Terry, he mentions the arrival of Mr. Bullock and Mr. Blore, “ to both of whom,” Mrs. Maxwell Scott writes, “ Abbotsford was to owe much.”

² This is listed in the Catalogue of the Abbotsford Library. *Voyages, Dangerous Adventures, and Imminent Escapes of Captain Richard Falconer, &c. ; with MS. note by Sir W. S. 4th edit. 12mo. Lond. 1734.*

quoth Sancho,"—I mark them for my own. Mrs. Scott, Sophia, Anne, and the boys, unite in kind remembrances. Ever yours truly,

W. SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you two days ago mentioning why I had not been able to send the proceeds of your bill & that I intended to send £600 which I am to receive in the course of eight or ten days. Not being in town myself I could only employ Messrs Ballantyne in a business of this nature & my wish was far from displeasing you to save you even a momentary advance when money is scarce. I am faithfully promised my cash next week so that if you find it more convenient to wait a few days longer there will be no occasion for you to accept the bill. I am hurrying the matter as much as I can but the law admits of anything save dispatch & some weeks delay has been necessarily incurd. I am sorry you should have incurd a moments anxiety on the subject & am meanwhile Yours very truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 23 *October* 1813

Mr. John Murray Albemarle Street

[*John Murray*]

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter & I am extremely sorry you should have been a day in advance. The delay of signing some papers has postponed payment of my funds (which are certain) untill next week or the beginning of November at farthest. I sent to John Ballantyne to remit you the money for the first bill if he could conveniently be in so much advance for me failing which I sent him a bill on you at 3 months & directed

him to send you the proceeds to meet that which was due. I shall send you £600 without waiting the currency of the two next bills the instant I can get at my cash which as I said before will be in the course of ten days or thereabouts. By rights I should have had it on the 21st ulto. but was disappointed. I am truly sorry you should have suffered a moments inconvenience but the instant I was informd the cash was not to be paid on Monday last I took measures to remedy it & was about to write to you the instant I should hear from Ballantyne. I will take care you shall have the use of the money for retiring these bills as long as to compensate for your present advance which I can do without inconvenience as the money is payable in London.

I receivd your friends the Trails as civilly as I could but could only prevail on them to take breakfast with us. Believe me very truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 26 *October* [1813]

The contents of the renewd bill should have been with [*indecipherable*] ere now failing J. B.s being able to advance the money in his own score. But perhaps they might require it should be accepted though they seldom do so with me.

[*John Murray*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE, ST. JOHN STREET, EDINR.

[PM. 31st *October* 1813]

DEAR JOHN,—I can have no choice whatever in the matter of the loan but am most anxious to have it settled as soon as possible with one party or other. More than £4000 I think cannot be wanted besides it was the sum mentiond to the D. of B. He will be at Bowhill in this neighbourhood next week so the deeds could be executed without delay. If there is an option no doubt

it would be better to transact with Allans party to whom names etc. have been already disclosed. But above all procrastination is to be avoided.

The children want some books for præmiums to be given to the cottage infantry—namely two ordinary bibles and four other books such as the Cheap repository or other instructive tracts for the use of the poor. I shall hear no end of it unless you can send these by *John Young Galashiels* carrier who leaves Edinr. on Wednesday morning—mind the *Galashiels* not the Selkirk or Melrose or Jedburgh or Kelso or Cupar Angus carrier and not Peter Auld but John Young and not Saturday but Wednesday.

The nets are dear beyond all cry. Yours, etc.,
[*Kilpatrick*] W. S.

TO MR. CONSTABLE OR MR. CADDELL

[*November 1813*]

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not yet got the paper for signature & really matters will not admit of the delay even of hours. I shall have a servant ready to go to D.¹ & I think the snow will detain the D. at home so there will be no chance of missing him. But for goodness' sake let us get the thing finishd I trusted to have got the paper last night. I shall be at home all this morning. Yours truly

CASTLE STREET

W. S.

[*Stevenson*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE, ST. JOHN STREET, EDINR.

DEAR JOHN,—I am glad things are come to a point at last. I presume the new term is meant i.e. the 15th. If things are very much pinchd some cash may be got here in the mean while providing the loan is certain. Indeed I want some myself to pay things here as I suppose I must not expect the balance of my own money received by you nor have you ever let me know the amount. I think I will make one cast for fortune and

¹ i.e. Drumlanrig.

buy a lottery ticket. Will you send for one to Sievewrights office and as you are not very lucky I would rather Mrs. Ballantyne or your mother took the trouble of buying it than you ; as the doctrine of chances will be more in their favour. Or perhaps if Mr. Constable is walking that way he will make the purchase. I should have some confidence in his good stars. The lottery begins drawing as tomorrow.

Nothing else occurs except that you should beat your brains about getting in debts and selling some stock if possible. Surely matters must now be looking rather better. Yours truly

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD *tuesday* [PM. Nov. 3, 1813.

Tuesday was Nov. 2]

[*Kilpatrick*]

TO THE RIGHT. HON. LORD BYRON, 4 BENNET STREET,
ST. JAMES'S, LONDON

ABBOTSFORD, 6th Nov. 1813

MY DEAR LORD,—I was honoured with your Lordship's letter of the 27th September,¹ and have sincerely to regret that there is such a prospect of your leaving Britain, without my achieving your personal acquaintance. I heartily wish your Lordship had come down to Scotland this season, for I have never seen a finer, and you might have renewed all your old associations with Caledonia, and made such new ones as were likely to suit you. I dare promise you would have liked me well enough—for I have many properties of a Turk—never trouble myself about futurity—am as lazy as the day is long—delight in collecting silver-mounted pistols and ataghans, and go out of my own road for no one—all which I take to be

¹ "The letter in question has not been preserved in Scott's collection of correspondence. This leaves some allusions in the answer obscure."—LOCKHART. The letter does not appear in Byron's published correspondence, but he wrote a letter to Tom Moore on the same date after he had visited Aston Hall, Rotherham, where he had stayed with the Wedderburn Websters. See Prothero's *Letters and Journals of Byron*, ii, 266-67.

attributes of your good Moslem. Moreover, I am somewhat an admirer of royalty, and in order to maintain this part of my creed, I shall take care never to be connected with a court, but stick to the *ignotum pro mirabili*.

The author of the *Queen's Wake*¹ will be delighted with your approbation. He is a wonderful creature for his opportunities, which were far inferior to those of the generality of Scottish peasants. Burns, for instance—(not that their extent of talents is to be compared for an instant)—had an education not much worse than the sons of many gentlemen in Scotland. But poor Hogg literally could neither read nor write till a very late period of his life; and when he first distinguished himself by his poetical talent, could neither spell nor write grammar. When I first knew him, he used to send me his poetry, and was both indignant and horrified when I pointed out to him parallel passages in authors whom he had never read, but whom all the world would have sworn he had copied. An evil fate has hitherto attended him, and baffled every attempt that has been made to place him in a road to independence. But I trust he may be more fortunate in future.

I have not yet seen Southey in the Gazette as Laureate. He is a real poet, such as we read of in former times, with every atom of his soul and every moment of his time dedicated to literary pursuits, in which he differs from almost all those who have divided public attention with him. Your Lordship's habits of society, for example, and my own professional and official avocations, must necessarily connect us much more with our respective classes in the usual routine of pleasure or business, than if we had not any other employment than *vacare musis*. But Southey's ideas are all poetical, and his whole soul dedicated to the pursuit of literature. In this respect, as well as in many others, he is a most striking and interesting character.

¹ James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.

I am very much interested in all that concerns your *Giaour*, which is universally approved of among our mountains. I have heard no objection except by one or two geniuses, who run over poetry as a cat does over a harpsichord, and they affect to complain of obscurity. On the contrary, I hold every real lover of the art is obliged to you for condensing the narrative, by giving us only those striking scenes which you have shown to be so susceptible of poetic ornament, and leaving to imagination the says I's and says he's, and all the minutiae of detail which might be proper in giving evidence before a court of justice. The truth is, I think poetry is most striking when the mirror can be held up to the reader, and the same kept constantly before his eyes ; it requires most uncommon powers to support a direct and downright narration ; nor can I remember many instances of its being successfully maintained even by our greatest bards.

As to those who have done me the honour to take my rhapsodies for their model, I can only say they have exemplified the ancient adage, " one fool makes many ; " nor do I think I have yet had much reason to suppose I have given rise to anything of distinguished merit. The worst is, it draws on me letters and commendatory verses, to which my sad and sober thanks in humble prose are deemed a most unmeet and ungracious reply. Of this sort of plague your Lordship must ere now have had more than your share, but I think you can hardly have met with so original a request as concluded the letter of a bard I this morning received, who limited his demands to being placed in his due station on Parnassus—and invested with a post in the Edinburgh Custom House.

What an awakening of dry bones seems to be taking place on the Continent ! I could as soon have believed in the resurrection of the Romans as in that of the Prussians—yet it seems a real and active renovation of national spirit. It will certainly be strange enough if that tremendous pitcher, which has travelled to so many

fountains should be at length broken on the banks of the Saale¹: but from the highest to the lowest, we are the fools of fortune. Your Lordship will probably recollect where the Oriental tale occurs, of a Sultan who consulted Solomon on the proper inscription for a signet-ring, requiring that the maxim which it conveyed should be at once proper for moderating the presumption of prosperity and tempering the pressure of adversity. The apophthegm supplied by the Jewish sage was, I think, admirably adapted for both purposes, being comprehended in the words "And this also shall pass away."

When your Lordship sees Rogers, will you remember me kindly to him? I hope to be in London next spring, and renew my acquaintance with my friends there. It will be an additional motive if I could flatter myself that your Lordship's stay in the country will permit me the pleasure of waiting upon you. I am, with much respect and regard, your Lordship's truly honoured and obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

I go to Edinburgh next week, *multum gemens*.

[Lockhart]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE, BOOKSELLER, EDINR.

MY DEAR SIR,—I embrace your proposal to stand to half the chance of the ticket and two halves and we will see how luck will favour us. I shall be in town upon the 12th and settle the bill for Dame Fortunes favours. For my own share I cant much complain of the good Lady

¹ Referring to the autumn campaign. "Napoleon's position was critical, all but hopeless. His line of retreat [after the Battle of Leipzig] . . . passed across the left wing of the Allies; and almost the whole of Germany had to be traversed before a halt could be made. . . . One Austrian detachment approached Napoleon's flank obliquely, but effected nothing. York alone showed himself dangerous, by seizing the passages of the Saale and compelling the Emperor to take the route through the Thuringer Wald by Erfurt. . . . The French continued their march, and on November 2 crossed the Rhine at Mainz."—*Cambridge Mod. Hist.*, ix, 540.

having had my own share of luck in this world though we cannot expect it should be always smooth water.

I see your catalogue flaming in front of the papers which I dare say will be a great treat to amateurs and come well in to hansell Johns opening campaign.¹ We had the finest season here that was ever known. Believe me very truly yours

W SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 6 *November* [PM. 1813]

[*Kilpatrick*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

ABBOTSFORD, 6th *November* 1813

MANY thanks my dearest friend for your kind letter which found us loitering away our time as usual by what some one calls "well-sung Tweed's baronial stream." It is really a fine though not a very large river when it passes my kingdom of Barataria and is at this moment mustering up all its waters with a voice like distant thunder. Alas ! it is a summons for me to prepare for scenes of a very different kind and to abandon my cottage for the noise and dissonance of our law courts which commence their sessions on the 11th. I cannot say with the patient submission of Blackstone

Then welcome business welcome strife
Welcome the cares and thorns of life
The drowsy bench the babbling hall
For thee fair Justice wellcome all.²

On the contrary I fear if Justice slept till I went to Edinburgh to wake her her votaries would think her deaf as well as blind. But go I must and it is no small comfort to think we have had the most delightful season ever remembered in Scotland and that part of it was employed my dear friend in meeting you. Mrs. Morritt whose indisposition alarmed us not a little, is getting better—

¹ *i.e.* John Ballantyne commencing as "literary and art auctioneer in the Hanover Street premises." See *The Ballantyne Press*, p. 48, and letter to Morritt, p. 397.

² *The Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse.*

not so much so however as to give great confidence in her future health. The disease with which she is assailed (the erysipilas) is cruelly deceitful & whoever is afflicted by its visitations must stand prepared for the most sudden & dangerous crisis. But she has got better for Harrowgate & I hope her health which is invaluable to her husband & friends will be in time reestablished.

I am sorry nothing can be done for poor Mathurine but I cannot think of intruding myself upon Lord Whitworth¹ for whose character and situation I have the respect which both so eminently demand. What could he think of me but as the most conceited coxcomb in the world if because my writings may have given him an hour's amusement I should think myself entitled to intrude any one on his patronage merely as a friend of mine. I never saw Mr. Mathurine in my life and probably never shall nor have I any other motive in wishing him well than that which I think would be common to me with Lord Whitworth—the wish namely to assist a man of very considerable literary powers and as I am informd of a most estimable private character who is fighting manfully with adverse circumstances and a feeling mind. As his present employment is to receive as pupils and boarders such young men as attend Trinity College it may perhaps be in your ladyship's power to mention his name to any of your Irish friends who may wish such an accommodation for their sons and in doing so I am convinced you would serve them as well as this unfortunate young man. His [house and] character render him I understand

¹ Charles Whitworth, Earl Whitworth (1752-1825). In 1802 he became British ambassador in Paris. At the great crisis in Napoleon's career, as well as in English history, on 13th March 1803, there was a famous scene between him and Napoleon at the Tuileries. At the end of a long tirade "Napoleon exclaimed loudly to Whitworth: 'Malheur à ceux qui ne respectent pas les traités. Ils en seront responsables à toute l'Europe.'" In 1813 Whitworth was made a lord of the bedchamber to George III. and appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland. Lady A. had recommended Scott applying to him: "You may rest assured that *your* name wd. do more than most peoples."

very fit for such a trust and after all it is astonishing how much the slightest glimpse of encouragement from such high rank and fashion as yours my dear Lady Marchioness will do for a person in his situation. Your encouragement is like a beam of the sun productive of effects far above your own calculation and if a poor *roturier* may judge I think it one of the most enviable attributes of rank that you can do so much good *à peu de frais*. What an excellent bishop of London you have given the kingdom in Mr. Howley. I hope he has not forgotten me as I shall be quite delighted to register a bishop among my friends. His charge is I should suppose among the most important in England and the trust could not be reposed in more worthy hands.

So Lord Aberdeen begins to figure in the great game and a greater sure was never played for by nations.¹ If I had nothing else to do but to indulge a wayward and wandering spirit I think I would set off to make him a visit at Commotau and I would trust to his receiving me like a harper in an old ballad

Minstrel they said thou sing'st so sweet
Fair entrance thou shalt win.

I intend to write to him one of these days to procure me if possible a sketch or print of the Cossack Hettman Platow. An English officer who was known to this renowned partisan begged one of his lances to add to my collection of arms but I believe it was lost when the French re-entered Hamburgh. Platow² is a great favourite of mine as well from Sir Robert Wilson's account of him formerly as from his conduct during the campaign of Moscow.

I am truly grieved for what you tell me of a great Lady³—She has thrown away her cards most deplorably in suffering herself to be made a catpaw of to serve the

¹ "Lord Aberdeen had gone as special Envoy to Austria from Britain . . . at Kommotau, the temporary headquarters of the Emperor."—*F.L.*

² See p. 231 and note, and p. 271.

³ The Princess of Wales.

purposes of the very people who at one time would willingly have had her head off. That she should leave quietly is the best her friends can wish her though it is not I should think quite agreeable to her temper.

My wife desires her most respectful remembrances & begs to say that if she can be of any use in the matter of the table linen of which your Ladyship spoke she will execute any charge you may honour her with to the best of her ability.

My respects attend the Marquis Lady Maria & all the family & I ever am most truly your Ladyships honourd & obliged

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 6 Nov. [1813]

I shall be in Edinburgh next week.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO JOHN MURRAY

13th November 1813

DEAR SIR,—Yours arrived as I was just about to write to you. My debtor has postponed to the 15th which is you know our *term day* making payment of my money meanwhile the discharges &c are subscribed. Now as I cannot think of your being a moment inconvenienced (& have not the least reason for wishing a moments delay) I would wish you to draw for the whole £900 on me in course of post and at five days sight. I have upwards of £4000 to receive from one person & £1000 from another. My agent informs me the money is in Scotland not in London but if your draught does not appear by the 15th I will send the cash by a bill on London. There must be some difference of discount &c of which you will have the goodness to apprise me.

I never thought of engaging in any transaction in which you were to follow the faith of any one but myself & was faithfully promised a large proportion of this large

sum on 21 Sept. but the circumstances of the times over which my party had no controul delayd the arrangement till the term day when it can be no longer postponed. I shall be in town on Wednesday to which place pray direct the draught and rely on my doing it all honour.

EDINBURGH *Saturday*

I delayd sending the above till I came to this place that I might make assurance doubly certain & have the pleasure to say that I will send the draught on Monday having just seen the person who pays the money.

[*John Murray*]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, KESWICK

EDINBURGH, *November 13, 1813*

I do not delay, my Dear Southey, to say my *gratulator*. Long may you live, as Paddy says, to rule over us, and to redeem the crown of Spenser and of Dryden to its pristine dignity. I am only discontented with the extent of your royal revenue, which I thought had been £400, or £300 at the very least. Is there no getting rid of that iniquitous modus, and requiring the *butt* in kind? I would have you think of it; I know no man so well entitled to Xeres sack as yourself, though many bards would make a better figure at drinking it. I should think that in due time a memorial might get some relief in this part of the appointment—it should be at least £100 wet and £100 dry. When you have carried your point of discarding the ode, and my point of getting the sack, you will be exactly in the situation of Davy in the farce, who stipulates for more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar.¹ I was greatly delighted with the circumstances of your investiture. It reminded me of the porters at Calais with Dr Smollett's baggage, six of them seizing upon one small portmanteau, and bearing it in triumph to his lodgings. You see what it is to laugh at

¹ Garrick's *Bon Ton, or High Life Above Stairs*.

the superstitions of a gentleman-usher, as I think you do somewhere. "The whirligig of time brings in his revenges."¹

Adieu, my dear Southey ; my best wishes attend all that you do, and my best congratulations every good that attends you—yea even this, the very least of Providence's mercies, as a poor clergyman said when pronouncing grace over a herring. I should like to know how the Prince received you ; his address is said to be excellent, and his knowledge of literature far from despicable. What a change of fortune even since the short time when we met ! The great work of retribution is now rolling onward to consummation, yet am I not fully satisfied—*pereat iste* !—there will be no permanent peace in Europe till Buonaparte sleeps with the tyrants of old. My best compliments attend Mrs Southey and your family. Ever yours,

WALTER SCOTT

[Lockhart]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

MY DEAR SIR,—I inclose the deed the terms of which are more unfavourable than we talkd of: for I understood that my life was to be insured & that on redeeming the annuity I would have the benefit of the policy.² In the circumstances however I must submit. I should think 6 months notice of the intention to redeem amply sufficient for the annuitants convenience and rather more agreeable to mine. It will be desireable to have the deed written out so soon as possible that it may be signed and the transaction closed. Yours truly W. S.

CASTLE STREET *Tuesday* [16 Nov. 1813] Private.

[Stevenson]

¹ *Twelfth Night*, Act V. Scene 1.

² What happened between September and November I cannot trace exactly, for there is a gap between September 1813 and April 1814 in the correspondence of Cadell with Constable and Constable with Cadell. Apparently Scott had accepted the annuity scheme suggested by Constable but at first refused by Scott. See p. 358. But see Letters to John Ballantyne in Appendix to Vol. I.

TO CHARLES, DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

MY LORD DUKE,—I have the honour to enclose the deed respecting my annuity transaction. It is proper to remark that although in consequence of your Graces extreme goodness you are only a surety for my duly fullfilling the terms of my obligation of which the Creditor is full aware yet in the form of law we are both bound as principal parties. I intend to lodge with your Grace a regular assignment in your favour to a policy of insurance on my own life for £4000 so that in case of my dying before redeeming the annuity (which I trust God willing to do in the course of two years) your Grace may not have the slightest trouble other than may be caused by the loss of your obliged friend. The policy is not yet come down from London where the insurance is made. As for the regular payment of the annuity while it subsists I have no apprehension on that score having so good a life-income & having for so many years paid the whole of my salary to Mr. Home (£1300) without inconvenience which is now thank heaven & good frends turnd over to the broad shoulders of the public. Your Grace will have the goodness to keep this letter by you till the beginning of the week when I will lodge with you a proper bond of relief with the policy of which while this engagement subsists your Grace will have the benefit in case of my death. Your Grace subscribes the deed on all the pages before two witnesses of the masculine gender & above my name. This transaction puts me in complete possession of far the greater share of my own copyrights & a new edition of the *Lady of the Lake* which is going to press will be just £700 in my way, this Christmas I enclose a note which Hay Donaldson has had from Scott—it will be necessary to take some step or other about that vote.

The president requested me to mention to your Grace when I saw or had occasion to write that the Death of a Scotch peer of the sixteen *does* vacate the seat to which

I can add the authority of my brethren in office & of Wight on Elections.

If it should be convenient to your Grace to subscribe the deed this evening my servant will either attend your pleasure or call for it in the morning. I am very desirous to pay my respects at Dalkeith any day your Grace is likely to be disengaged & am ever my dear Lord Duke Your Graces truly obliged & grateful

WALTER SCOTT

CASTLE STREET 17 *Novr.* 1813

I have mislaid Willie Scotts note—he presses for an answer on the subject of his vote within a few days. I would we could find a good purchaser—the price is very moderate £600. I find the horses are not frosted so this will only reach your Grace at breakfast tomorrow.

[*Buccleuch*]

TO JOHN B. MORRITT, ROKEBY, BY GRETA BRIDGE,
YORKSHIRE

EDINR. 20 *November* 1813

I DID not answer your very kind letter¹ my dear Morritt untill I could put your friendly heart to rest upon the

¹ On 4th November Morritt wrote to Scott that he had heard “that your poor friend Ballantyne had failed & with great grief that you were likely to be a sufferer to a very great extent by his failure, indeed to an amount which if true must be very distressing. For God’s sake then my dear friend let not the consideration of the money advanced by Hoare upon Ballantyne’s bill & my security increase your embarrassment for a moment. I will settle with Hoare when the time of payment comes & I trust you will allow me to a sufficient claim on your friendship to gratify my feelings in this instance by sharing yours; & that you will not on any account endeavour to repay me till it is perfectly convenient to you. Should it never be so I shall grieve on your account but believe me not on my own. I beseech you therefore to dismiss from your mind a distress which would be injurious to the friendship that I trust will long prevail between us.” Morritt was a great gentleman, and it is difficult not to feel that this letter and Southey’s should have left a deeper impression on Scott’s impetuous and reckless temper. To the above letter Morritt replied on the 21st: “Certainly no letter I ever received from you was more welcome than

report you have had which I could not do entirely untill this term of Martinmas was passd. I have the pleasure to say that there is no truth whatever in the Ballantynes reported bankruptcy. They have had severe difficulties for the last four months to make their resources balance the demands upon them and I having the price of Rokeby and other monies in their hands have had considerable reason for apprehension and no slight degree of plague and trouble. Their balances however have been so favourable at this term and they have been so well supported that I have got out of hot water upon their account and have not the least doubt of extricating my cash without any eventual loss as the funds greatly over balance the claims upon them and will make an ample reversion. They are winding up their bookselling concern with great regularity & are to abide hereafter by the printing office which with its stock &c will revert to them freely. The large and heavy payments which they had to make at this term have been all punctually discharged & I must not omit to say that to secure my own copy-rights I have purchased them myself at a price which I think is likely to prove very advantageous & I do not propose to sell more than single editions of them in future. It would have been £10,000 in my pocket had I taken this resolution some years ago, when I first sired with the Muses. The purchase money was upwards of £3000 a heavy sum to be paid on three months notice and when I had been laying out £5000 on property—I have been able however to redeem the offspring of my brain & they are like to pay me like grateful children for

that wch arrived this morning." He explains that he had heard in Newcastle that Scott had been involved in a loss of £20,000 through his friendship for Ballantyne. For him he felt the interest Scott had inspired. "What your sins are I know not but upon my soul I believe that such is the envy and malignity of mankind that hundreds who have not even the slightest knowledge of you would be glad of any ill luck that befell you merely because you have been successful and happy &c. . . . You are so naturally inclined to be happy that there is no stage effect, nothing sentimental in your prosperity."

a new edition of the Lady of [the] Lake & Rokeby is going to press & my share will amount to £1200,—This matter has set me a thinking about money more seriously than ever I did in my life & I have begun by insuring my life for £4000, to secure some ready cash to my family should I slip girths suddenly. I think my other property library &c may be worth about £12000 & I have not much debt.

If in the course of these matters Hoares bill should come too speedily upon us which I think is far from unlikely since the collecting of the debts due to the House after Christmas will not probably go on with all the rapidity which can be desired I will then apply to your kindness for a delay of three or four months which will bring it to Whitsunday when I have large funds of my own coming in but which cannot be got between terms.

Upon the whole I see no prospect of any loss whatever & although in the course of human events I may be disappointed there certainly *can* be none that can vex your kind & affectionate heart on my account. I am young with a large official income & if I lose anything now I have gained a great deal in my day. I cannot tell you and will not attempt to tell you how much I was affected by your letter—so much indeed that for several days I could not make my mind up to express myself on the subject. Thank God all real danger was yesterday put over—& I will write in two or three days a funny letter without any of these vile cash matters of which it may be said there is no living with them nor without them. The Ballantynes have behaved very fairly & honestly & I trust will do very well. Ever yours most truly

WALTER SCOTT

[Law]

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I got my cash on Thursday but as they gave me bills at 60 days in London I was obliged to delay

a post to have some of them exchanged for the inclosed bill at 3 days sight for £600 which will immediately put you in possession of cash for the two first bills which you had the goodness to accept for my convenience. In the beginning of December I will send you the other £300 to meet the bill which falls due in January which will close the transaction.¹ I am truly vexed and sorry you should have had a moment's delay or uneasiness but cart-ropes could not drag the money out sooner than the term though payment had been promised at September or October at furthest. Will you let me know what Interest I owe you that I may add it to my next remittance, and believe me very much your obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 20 *Novr.* 1813

[*Sir Alfred J. Law*]

TO HARRIET, DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH

IN answer to your Graces obliging enquiries which Lady Anne had the goodness to transmit to me I am happy to say that my young people are all very well excepting the youngest who has had a feverish cold & is now getting better. We were so fortunate as to get over the measles last year. I should like to know if Lady Anne has got a very fine national Spanish song of which the music is quite magnificent the chorus is

Alla guerra Alla guerra Españoles
Muera Napoleon.

It is by far the finest piece of popular music since the Marseillais hymn. I am seeking it every where.

Little Sophia (who is covered with orange ribbons) begs her respects to the young ladies & I am ever Your Graces much obliged & truly faithful humble Serv

W. SCOTT

CASTLE STREET, *Monday* [29 *Nov.* 1813]

[*Buccleuch*]

¹ See letter to Murray (6th January 1814), p. 395.

TO HARRIET, DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH

MRS SCOTT & I will do ourselves the honor to dine at Dalkeith on Saturday 11th December and accept of your Graces kind hospitality for the evening. The person whom I heard sing the Spanish war song had learnt it among some French prisoners—if I can get a copy I will send one to Lady Anne.

The report of the day is that Davoust has been defeated near Ratzebourg¹ with the loss of 15000 men which if true will once more liberate the poor oppressed Hamburgers.—Ever your Graces truly honored and obliged

W. SCOTT

CASTLE STREET, *friday* [3 Dec. 1813]

I sent W. Erskines card . . .

[*Buccleuch*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

[EDINBURGH, 10th Dec. 1813]

MANY thanks my dear friend for your kind token of remembrance, which I yesterday received. I ought to blush, if I had grace enough left, at my long and ungenerous silence. But what shall I say? The habit of procrastination which had always more or less a dominion over me does not relax its sway as I grow older and less willing to take up the pen. I have not written to dear Ellis this age and there is not a day that I do not think of you and him and one or two other friends in your southern land. I am very glad the whiskey came safe—do not stint so laudable an admiration for the liquor of Caledonia, for I have plenty of right good and sound Highland Farintosh and I can always find an opportunity of sending you up a bottle.

We are here almost mad with the redemption of

¹ i.e. Ratzeburg in Holstein.

Holland¹ which has an instant and vivifying effect on the trade of Leith and indeed all along the east coast of Scotland. About £100,000 worth of various commodities which had been dormant in cellars and warehouses was sold the first day the news arrived, and orange ribbons and orange Boven was the order of the day among all ranks. It is a most miraculous revivification of dry bones which it has been our fate to witness—though of a tolerably sanguine temper I had fairly adjourn'd all hopes and expectations of the time till another generation. The same power however that open'd the windows of heaven and the fountains of the great deep has been pleased to close them and to cause his wind to blow upon the face of the waters so that we may look out from the ark of our preservation and behold the re-appearance of the mountain crests and old beloved and well-known landmarks which we had deemed swallow'd up for ever in the Abyss. The Dove with the olive branch would complete the simile but of that I see little hope. Bonaparte is that desperate gambler who will not rise while he has a stake left and indeed to be King of France would be a poor and pettifogging compromise, after having been almost Emperor of the world. I think he will drive things on till the fickle and impatient people over whom he rules get tired of him and shake him out of the saddle. Some circumstances seem to intimate his having become jealous of the Senate and indeed anything like a representative body however imperfectly constructed becomes dangerous to a tottering tyranny. The sword display'd on both frontiers may like that brandish'd across the road of Baalaam [*sic*] terrify even dumb and irrational subjection into utterance. But enough of politics though now a more cheerful subject than they have been for many years past.

¹ The general rising in the Netherlands following Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig. The Prince of Orange . . . "hastened back and, amid general enthusiasm, accepted at Amsterdam (Dec. 1813) the title of sovereign prince."—*Encyclo. Britt.*, 14th Edition.

I have had a strong temptation to go to the continent this Christmas and should certainly have done so had I been sure of getting from Amsterdam to Frankfort where as I know Lord Aberdeen and Lord Cathcart I might expect to get a wellcome. But notwithstanding my earnest desire to see the allied armies cross the Rhine which I suppose must be one of the grandest military spectacles in the world, I should like to know that the roads were tolerably secure and the means of getting forward attainable. In spring however if no unfortunate change takes place I trust to visit the camp of the Allies and see all the power pomp and circumstance of war which I have so often imagined and sometimes attempted to embody in verse.

Johnie Richardson¹ is a good honourable kind-hearted little fellow as lives in the world with a pretty taste for poetry which he has wisely kept under subjection to the occupation of drawing briefs and revising conveyances. It is a great good fortune for him to be in your neighbourhood as he is an idolator of genius and where could he offer up his worship so justly. And I am sure you will like him for he is really "officious innocent sincere"—Terry I hope will get on well; he is industrious and zealous for the honor of his art. Ventidius² must have been an

¹ John Richardson (1780-1864), of Kirklands, Roxburghshire. See vol. ii. p. 356. He was born at Gilmerton, near Edinburgh. He went to Dalkeith Grammar School and studied at Edinburgh University for the law. Among his chief friends in Edinburgh were Grahame of *The Sabbath* and Thomas Campbell, who wrote to him frequently from Germany in the years 1800-1. See Beattie's *Life of Campbell*, 1849. "In 1806 he removed to London, where he became head of the firm of Richardson, Loch, and Maclaurin, parliamentary solicitors." He was both parliamentary agent for the Crown in Scotland under the Whig Governments and solicitor for the City of Edinburgh. He devoted much of his life to the "amenities of literature" and associated with men like Scott, Jeffrey, Cockburn, Brougham, C. Bell, and Lord John Russell. "Both Scott and Cockburn have left on record expressions of their high sense of his amiable manner and blameless life."—IRVING, *Dict. of Eminent Scotsmen*. "Mr. John Richardson had shortly before this time taken a house in Miss Baillic's neighbourhood, on Hampstead Heath."—LOCKHART.

² In *Antony and Cleopatra* during his first season this year at Covent Garden.

excellent part for him hovering between tragedy and comedy which is precisely what will suit him. We have a woful want of him here both in public and private for he was one of the most easy and quiet chimney corner companions that I have had for these two or three years past. Sarah Smith who is a very excellent and well disposed young woman has been long very anxious to be known to you. I have always rather waved this request but I believe it will not be in my power to parry it much longer without hurting her feelings. She is well received among my Scotch friends here particularly by Lady Douglas and the Duchess of Buccleuch. She is the leading tragic actress after Mrs. Siddons but the interval is more distant than I could wish for the sake of my little friend who is nevertheless an excellent Actress. I will send her a card to call for you when you get to Hampstead and you can give her as much of your countenance as you think will be agreeable to you.

I am very glad if any thing I have written to you could give pleasure to Miss Edgeworth though I am sure it will fall very short of the respect which I have for her brilliant talents. I always write to you *a la volée* and trust implicitly to your kindness and judgment upon all occasions where you may chuse to communicate any part of my letters.¹

As to the taxing men I must battle them as I can. They are worse than the great Emathian conqueror who

—bade spare

The house of Pindarus when temple and tower
Went to the ground—²

Your pinasters are coming up gallantly in the nursery-bed at Abbotsford. I trust to pay the whole establishment a Christmas visit, which will be, as Robinson Crusoe

¹ "Miss Baillie had apologized to him for having sent an extract of one of his letters to her friend at Edgeworthstown."—LOCKHART.

² Milton, Sonnet VIII—*When the Assault was intended to the City*. The original letter ends here in MS. The rest is from Lockhart.

says of his glass of rum, "to mine exceeding refreshment." All Edinburgh have been on tiptoe to see Madame de Staël, but she is now not likely to honour us with a visit, at which I cannot prevail on myself to be very sorry ; for as I tired of some of her works, I am afraid I should disgrace my taste by tiring of the authoress too.¹ All my little people are very well, learning, with great pain and diligence, much which they will have forgotten altogether, or nearly so, in the course of twelve years hence : but the habit of learning is something in itself, even when the lessons are forgotten.

I must not omit to tell you that a friend of mine, with whom that metal is more plenty than with me, has given me some gold mohurs² to be converted into a ring for enchasing King Charles' hair ; but this is not to be done until I get to London, and get a very handsome pattern. Ever, most truly and sincerely, yours,

W. SCOTT

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London, and Lockhart*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

NOTHING my dear Miss Clephane could be so acceptable as your highland communications. Some of them indeed have more fervour than poetry and I rather think the lowland Jacobites have beat the gael in their songs upon this memorable occasion. I have got from a musical French prisoner of war in the neighbourhood of Abbotsford a most grand military air of the Spanish patriots—indeed far the finest thing of the kind which has appeared amid all these convulsions of the world excepting perhaps the Hymn of the Marseillais. Sophia is making you a

¹ After escaping from "Napoleonic Europe," Madame de Staël travelled "through Russia and Finland to Sweden . . . spent the winter in Stockholm, and then set out for England. Here she received a brilliant reception and was much lionized during the season of 1813."—*Encyclo. Britt.*, 14th Edition.

² Mohur, "a gold coin, originally Persian, but used in India from the 16th c. onward."—*N.E.D.* It represents twelve to fifteen rupees or 30s. In Persian the meaning is a seal, or seal ring.

copy but I fear it will come too late to accompany this letter as she is not as yet a ready transcriber of music. Monsr. Joubert told me he had often heard the Spanish sold[i]ers come on to battle singing the grand Chorus—*A la guerra, a la guerra Espanoles—muera Napoleon*—

I had no means of communicating with Lord Compton on the subject of his watch as I did not see or hear anything of their motions in the course of their return to England. But I cannot suppose the loss of any great consequence especially [as] a young Lords time is seldom so very valuable as to require frequent appeal to the watch so that the temporary inconvenience would not be much worth mending. At [the] same time from the little I saw of Lord C. he seemd to be a very well-thinking sensible young man. As for Paterson the other guest whom you had the goodness to extend hospitality to on my account he spoke so much in praise of your kindness that I suspect his jaws must have ached after an ovation of such unusual length as the spectators did after his first efforts to mix in conversation. He is truly the most silent bard it was ever my fate to meet with and when his poem is finished it will I daresay contain more lines than he ever spoke words in his life.

From what I understood from little Richardson who was at Abbotsford in the end of Autumn I am disposed to think that there will not be such great loss in the London house as Mrs. Clephane first anticipated. I sincerely hope this will prove true and I think I can answer that Richardson will leave nothing undone on his part for he is a very good and friendly young man.

And so our friend and ancient ally Nick Frog has returned to croak in his own marshes once more. The sensation produced in Leith nearly approached to frenzy such fine feelings have the mercantile world on whatever approaches their purse. One large proprietor of West India produce, on foreseeing the departure of these bales and barrels which had so long lumbered his

warehouses felt such a sudden turn of joy that he required to be bled and treated like a criminal repri[e]ved from death or a fair lady whose lover suddenly reappears in the last chapter but one of the novel—One bad consequence I shall have from these splendid successes and that is being deprived of the services of my friend and banner bearer Weber. He is returning to the Continent a cousin german of his being named one of the Commissioners of the Saxon Regency who may be able to do something for him. I sincerely hope his expectations may be fulfilled and to be sure he had but little encouragement to remain in Edinburgh.

I had a very polite and flattering card from Miss Stanley on their change of route. It would have given me great pleasure to have seen them at Abbotsford and also to Mrs. Scott.

Your verse translations are excellent and when you pick me up any more songs I hope you will favour them with a metrical dress for truly they gain by it very much. The *black music* of the Lowlanders I should conjecture to be artillery. In an old Scottish poem the cannon of Berwick are called her auld black bells. The highlanders were long in being reconciled to this sort of martial concerto. At the battle of Glenlivet where by the bye your Chieftain gained great honour the highlanders flung them silver on the ground when some small field pieces which Huntley had brought to the field began to fire upon them. It was in short a mode of warfare with which they were unaccustomed—they have been pretty well-used to it of late years.

Poor Caberfae¹ is here—very ill indeed and quite broken in mind and spirits—he is wavering in his conversation and forgets everything the next minute—it is piteous to see such a wreck of what were once talents of a

¹ Francis, Lord Seaforth. When he died he was succeeded by his daughter, Lady Hood, who became the Hon. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie of Seaforth. "The Celtic designation of the chief of the clan MacKenzie, *Caberfae*, means *Staghead*, the bearing of the family."—LOCKHART. See note, vol. iv. p. 13.

high order but shall we see the "fears of the brave and follies of [the] wise" are the doom and advancing age and infirmity. I have not heard of Lady Hood lately but I daresay she is greatly tired of India and willing to get back either to South or North Britain as speedily as possible.

Adieu I am going out to Dalkeith where I shall get what Win. Jenkins calls a [kiver] for my [bit] of nonsense¹—Sophia sends her best love and thanks for the tune and the kind recollection which it implies. Charlotte joins in kindest remembrances to Mrs. Clephane and Miss Anne Jane. I wish you would leave the lonely isle and come here in the spring though such an hermit as I would see but little of you. I have some thoughts to leave my cell fix the scallop in my hat and commence pilgrim.

Seriously if the roads be tolerably safe and communications open I design to take a short tour on the continent in our Spring Vacation instead of going to London—I hear the carriage—Your truly and obliged and faithful friend.

WALTER SCOTT

Decr. 11th 1813. EDINBURGH

[*Northampton*]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR SHARPE,—Accept the old helmet sent herewith. I am sorry it is imperfect wanting one part of the beaver. But Don Quixotes laboured under the same defect and that is high authority. In other respects you may find it useful when you draw. I came home today through *two feet of snow*. Yours ever

W. SCOTT

friday Evening [1813 ?]

[*Hornel*]

¹ This is a conjectural reading of the phrase Scott is quoting. He probably had in mind the opening of a letter from Winifred Jenkins to Mrs. Mary Jones in Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker* which runs thus: "The 'squire has been so kind as to rap my bit of nonsense under the kiver of his own sheet."

1814

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I had quite forgot the unaccepted bill which I took it for granted was returned to Edinr. but on calling at Sir W. Forbes they told me the proceeds were at my credit with them which is quite as broad as long so you may depend on having it with interest &c two days before it falls due.¹

I am just now labouring to bring Swift to a close as Constable is not unreasonably very desirous to have it out. I trust to correct the last proof this month & then I have not much to do and I will turn to reviewing to make up lee way but above all to please Gifford who has reason to complain of me. I think I shall be in town in spring unless the state of Holland is such as to tempt me to go there which I should like very much : but this is all contingent. If the roads were safe for a non-combattant I would endeavour to reach the camp of the allies providing Lord Aberdeen were there who is an old friend.

As to subjects of reviews I have a very curious American book of great humour² of which I have long meditated an article as it is quite unknown in this country & the quotations are very diverting. I should have done this at Abbotsford but there I had no amanuensis and here I have no time for the old growling Dean of St Patricks. I will also try the calamities of authors but was it not

¹ See letter to Murray (20th November 1813), p. 386.

² Probably *A History of New York from the beginning of the World to the end of the Dutch Dynasty*, by Diedrich Knickerbocker (i.e. Washington Irving), 2nd ed., 1812. See previous letter to Brevoort and other references later. *The Calamities of Authors* . . . by the Author of the *Curiosities of Literature* (i.e. Isaac Disraeli) also appeared in 1812, as did the *Bride of Abydos*. The *Calamities* had been reviewed in the September-December number of the *Quarterly* 1812.

reviewed before? I can say little excepting in addition to the history of MacDonald & Heron both of whom I knew—the former was a man of high genius the latter a mere sot & beast—both starved to death—

I have read Lord Byrons *Bride of Abydos* with great delight & only delay acknowledging the receipt of a copy from the author till I can send him a copy of the *Life of Swift*. Is he in town at present. Yours very truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 6th Jan. 1814

Mr. John Murray Bookseller
Albemarle Street London

[*John Murray*]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT

EDIN. 7th January 1814

Many happy new years to you and Mrs. Morritt.

MY DEAR MORRITT—I have postponed writing a long while in hopes to send you the *Life of Swift*. But I have been delayd by an odd accident. Poor Weber whom you may have heard me mention as a sort of grinder of mine who assisted me in various ways has fallen into a melancholy state. His habits like those of most German students were always too convivial—this of course I guarded against while he was in my house which was always once a week at least. But unfortunately he undertook a long walk through the highlands of upwards of 2000 miles and I suppose took potations pottle deep to support him through the fatigue. His mind became accordingly quite unsettled and after some strange behaviour here he was fortunately prevaild upon to go to his mother who resides in Yorkshire.¹ She is an Englishwoman and well born a sister I think or near relation of Mr. Barham the

¹ Weber's sister, Maria D. Fawsett, writes to Scott on the 21st from near Leeds reporting the state of his health and that their mother has removed him to York, to be under a Dr. Bent. In the following February Weber begins to correspond again with Scott. Lockhart treats poor Weber with his usual brutality, but Scott always speaks of him with kindness and respect. See Lockhart's biography, chap. xxvii.

Member of parl[iamen]t. It is not unlikely from something that dropd from him that he may take it into his head to call at Rokeby in which case you must parry any visit upon the score of Mrs. Morritt's health. If he were what he used to be you would be much pleased with him ; for besides a very extensive general acquaintance with literature he was particularly deep in our old dramatick lore, a good modern linguist, a tolerable draughtsman and antiquary and a most excellent hydrographer. I have not the least doubt that if he submits to the proper regimen of abstinence and moderate exercise he will be quite well in a few weeks or days—if not, it is miserable to think what may happen—the being suddenly deprived of his services in this melancholy way flung me back at least a month with Swift and left me no time to write to my friends for all my Memoranda &c. were in his hands and had to be new modelld, &c. &c. &c. The Ballantynes are going on prosperously—the younger who is very active has open'd a saleroom¹ for books on commission like Leigh and Sotheby in London & has sold a great part of his own stock by putting it into the catalogues of others. The elder is printing away with his ten presses & our bill at Hoares will be regularly retired—if they should want a hundred or two to make it up I can easily spare it them. So I trust there will be no occasion to trouble your kindness on that score. The sales of the younger for fifty days passd have run between £50 & £100 a day on which his own commission must have been a good thing besides getting rid of lots of his own stock. As to the exaggerated & absurd reports which have given you so much alarm I can only say that had I been to pay all they owed in the world without receiving a penny of their funds the loss could [not] have been so high as rumour ascribed to it.

Our glorious prospects on the Continent call'd forth the congratulations of the City of Edinburgh among

¹ See above, p. 376.

others. The Magistrates askd me to draw their address which was presented by the Lord Provost in person who happens to be a gentleman of birth and fortune.¹ The Prince said some very handsome things respecting the address with which the Magistrates were so much elated that they have done the genteel thing (as Winifred Jenkins says) by their literary adviser and presented me with the freedom of the City and a handsome piece of plate. I got the freedom at the same time with Lord Dalhousie and Sir Thomas Graham and the Provost gave a very brilliant entertainment—about 150 gentlemen dined at his own house all as well served as if there had been a dozen. So if one strikes a cuff on the one side from ill will there is a pat on the other from kindness and the shuttle cock is kept flying. To poor Charlotte's great horror I chose my plate in the form of an old English Tankard an utensil for which I have a particular respect especially when charged with good ale, cup, or any of these potables. I hope you will soon see mine.

Your little friends Sophia and Walter were at a magnificent party on 12th Night at Dalkeith where the Duke and Duchess entertained all Edinr. I think they have dreamd of nothing since but Aladdins lamp and the palace of Haroun Alraschid. I am uncertain what to do this spring. I would fain go on the continent for three or four weeks if it be then safe for non-combattants. If not we will have a merry meeting in London and like Master Silence

Eat and drink and make good cheer
And thank heaven for the merry year.

I have much to say about Triermain. The 4th Editn. is at press. The Empress Dowager of Russia has expressed such an interest in it that it will be inscribed to her in some doggrel sonnet or other by the unknown author. This is funny enough. Love a thousand times

¹ I cannot find that this was done.

to dear Mrs. Morritt who I trust keeps pretty well :
pray write soon a modest request from W. S.

[*Law*]

TO MISS SMITH

[*January 8, 1814*]

I HAVE been too long my dear Miss Smith of acknowledging your kind and wellcome token of remembrance. I am sure whatever credit I might gain at the recitation was due to the advantage you gave my verses and I am happy for your sake that the thing went off so well and pleasurably. I see by to-day's Courier that you have been again summond to the presence of Royalty so you will be quite a court lady and we will all ask favours of you. I shall certainly be both curious and pleased to see a woman of Made de Staëls¹ literary reputation though probably I may see very little of her unless particularly introduced for you know our circle is a very small one and she will be quite immersed among all the gay parties of this Northern Metropolis ; they are all I hear dying to see her but our latest reports on the subject will not allow that there is much chance of their being gratified for we hear her Scottish journey is postponed.

I am very glad Terry comes on well—he is a great fool not to embrace the advantage which your acquaintance would give him but he is a dreadful indolent visitor and I think lost many of his Edinburgh acquaintance in that way. I have had only one letter from him since he went to London : he spoke very modestly of his own success but was evidently satisfied with his reception. I think he must make a good figure for his talents are various his love to the profession great and his taste very good : but in personal appearance nature has not been so bountiful which is a pity.

I wonder you have nothing new in the theatrical world—that is nothing which is worthy of notice—Coleridge

¹ Who was in London during the winter of 1813-14 and contemplated a journey to Scotland. See above, p. 391.

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

[1814]

DEAR SHARPE,—I want to consult you very much on a point of taste. The town of Edinburgh, in their zeal for encouragement of *useful* learning, have proposed to present me a piece of plate. My choice was the old-fashioned tankard for ale, toast, and nutmeg. But the silversmith has called on me for more special directions, as he says he has orders to make it very handsome. My modesty has given way to my wish that the noble ore should really be made in a handsome form as to embossing and so forth, and I wish you would consider the matter for me, and give me a sketch. If you are to be at home about two, I will call on you. You understand; Squire Sullen's tankard,¹ the sort of thing in general.—
Yours ever, W. SCOTT

[*Sharpe's Letters*]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

[1814]

MY DEAR SHARPE,—I send you the tankard: I presume mine may hold about two quarts & so be larger as the silversmith told me he was directed to make it very handsome. I wish you as in a point of hostile honour [to] take the thing upon yourself utterly for your friend—I send you Kenmuir's dying speech which is you will see Authentic. The Silversmith's name is *William Marshall* South bridge & he will attend you when you please. One of the Irvines of Drum dines with me tomorrow—he has made sketches of some Scottish antiques & means to engrave them—Are you disengaged enough to meet him. Yours ever W. S.

CASTLE STREET *Saturday night* [1814]

[*Hornel*]

¹ Squire Sullen in Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem* (1707).

TO REV. E. BERWICK

MANY thanks my dear Sir for your kind letter which I received yesterday. Swift is now drawing to a close, but I am anxious to have your ideas concerning that part of the correspondence with Vanessa which is not published.¹ It is impossible to acquit Swift of great impropriety in that matter though I am convinced there was nothing criminal between the parties. I should like very much to see the letters if you can trust me so far as with the perusal. Of course I will give none of them to the public unless you think it can be done without disadvantage to the Dean. It is a bitter bad job to get him out of—I will send you the sheets in which I have treated of it as soon as they are printed—Should you think it proper to trust

¹ Berwick had written to Scott on 1st May 1810: "What shall we do as to Vanessa. I have the foul drafts of her letters to Swift and, tho it would be troublesome, I will, if you approve, copy and arrange them as nearly as I can according to their dates. . . . I wish we could make out a *good case for him* as to Vanessa. My partiality you see is great for Swift and you must indulge me in it." On 22nd January 1812 he writes: "How we shall manage about Vanessa 'hic labor, hoc opus est.' I have prepared all the letters which passed between them in a chronological order." The letter to which Scott is *here* answering is dated 27th December 1813. The *Lives* referred to are the *Lives of Messala Valerius, Messala Corvinus, and Titus Pomponius Atticus*, 1812, dedicated to Lord Moira. In his Introduction to the *Correspondence between Swift and Miss Vanhomrigh* (*Works*, vol. xix) Scott says: "The following transcript was made some years since by my learned and most obliging friend the Reverend Mr. Berwick of Esker near Leixlip . . . the internal evidence and the high character of Mr. Berwick are a sufficient warrant of the authenticity of these letters."

In replying to Scott on the 23rd June Berwick gives his reading of the Vanessa episode: "Whilst in England and at a distance from Stella love for a time triumphed over friendship and esteem—and during its reign he was guilty of all its usual improprieties any one of which tended to inspire Vanessa with hopes which were never to be realised—as soon as he came to Ireland his eyes were opened to his own folly but it was too late for her—What was then to be done—he must marry one of them—Love pointed at Vanessa—honour and character and gratitude pointed at Stella—and they as being founded on Virtue prevaild in the mind of a man of most original Integrity—But what kind of a marriage? You know—The ceremony was read, I believe to prevent his marrying Vanessa in the hour of weakness—and this marriage as soon as it came to Vanessa's ears killed her—it is a bitter bad job to get him out of it—but it is a thousand pities to have one so highly endowed depreciated by those who are not fit to wipe his shoes."

me with the letters they will come quite safe under cover to William Kerr Esq. General Post-Office, Edin. and I will return them the same way.

Ballantyne has promised to get me the lives but has not yet done—indeed I have been but a few days in town. For a Northern Athens as Edinburgh has been called by some conceited persons we are unpardonably slow in getting new publications. So soon as I get them I will see to have them well reviewed in the *Quarterly*. I have a friend who I think will help me to the scholarcraft which I have not myself. We now take much more to classical education than was usual in my time for though the grammar school was a good one there was a great loss of all that was acquired there when we went to the College. Edin. College is rather a royal school than an academy as it has no authority over the students excepting during the time they are in the class. The younger classes therefore are but oddly and irregularly attended and so farewell to any Greek and Latin which may have been previously acquired *sub ferula*.

Mr Kings¹ character of Swift seems very good, I am greatly indebted for a copy of it. I observe that in the Deans latter years he corresponded with him repeatedly. To give you some idea of what I have been able to procure I send you inclosed the Booksellers advertisement. I do not pretend to say that what I have got is of great or grave importance but much of it is curious. What do you say to the following lines in the Deans hand, which he has labelled "A wicked treasonable libel I wish I knew the author that I might inform agt. him." You will remem-

¹ In a letter of Theophilus Swift to Scott he had written : " I discovered by accident a paragraph unpublished in a letter of Dr. King's to the Dean which throws a strong light upon that matter," *i.e.* the four last years of Swift's life. " You will find the paragraph alluded to in the 3rd page of No. 26 of the *Cursory Remarks*." Unfortunately No. 26 of these *Remarks*, now in the National Library, have been torn out. In the letter which Scott is answering Berwick reports that in looking over a poem called *The Toast*, written by Dr. King about the year 1730, I find the following character of Swift written by the Doctor in Latin : J. Swift—*sui seculi decus*.

ber the suspicions that Geo. I. meant to declare a sort of left-hand marriage with the Duchess of Kendal & that his princess, mother of Geo. II. was supposed to have gone astray with Konigsmark. The lines are in the bitterest strain of Swift's satire. I quote them from memory :—

While the King & his Ministers make such a pother
And all about changing one w— for another
Thinks I to myself what needs all this strife
His Majesty first had a w— for a wife
And surely the difference amounts no more
Than that now he has gotten a wife of a w—
Now give me your judgement a very nice case on
Each Queen has a son say which is the base one
Say which of the two is the right Pr. of Wales
To succeed when God bless him His Majesty fails
Perhaps it may puzzle our loyal divines
To unite these two protestant paralell lines
From a left-handed wife & one turned out of doors
Two reputed Kings sons, both true sons of w—s
No law can determine it which is first oars
But alas poor old Engld. how wilt thou be mastered
For take which you please it must needs be a Bastard.¹

I return you the compliments of the season with all my heart—if Swift though he has cost me a world of labour had done me no other service than procuring me the pleasure of Dr. Berwick's acquaintance I should be well rewarded for the task I have undertaken.

Our winter has now set in seriously with much snow & frost. But the good news from the continent & the resurrection of the Independence of Europe keeps us warm at heart.

Southey has published a *Carmen Annuum* which has the greatest merit. I am delighted that the Regent has bestowed the laurel so worthily. It was offered to me in the most handsome manner possible but I had many reasons for declining. The Newspapers told about fifty lies about this matter as usual but one would have little

¹ *A Wicked Reasonable Libel*. See *Poems of Jonathan Swift*, ed. by W. E. Browning (1910), vol. ii. pp. 277-78.

to do who should mind them. Ever my dear Sir Your
truly obliged & faithful

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 10 *January* 1814.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT

How kind you are my dear friend in the midst of your distress (and such distress) to think of my matters. I wrote to you last week directing however to Rokeby that the Ballantynes would take up their bill regularly and give Mr Hoare no further trouble. The remittance was made last Wednesday (could not be sooner as I was out of town) and would meet the bill which was due as to-morrow. It would be in town today unless the mails were stopd. Once more many and kind thanks to you. But I cannot express the pain your letter gives me on Mrs. Morritts account and yours. I had heard some thing of it from Lady Douglas but not till two days since. I trust in God that she will be able to persevere in the course which may be recommended to insure a life so necessary to your happiness and to that of all who know her. Have you consulted Baillie? I have great faith in him—he has less quackery than is usual in his profession and is a most upright and sound thinking man. Alas my dear friend this is one of those cases in which we offer every advice at random with scarce the hope of suggesting any thing that has not occurd to the sufferer—And what can I say in the way of consolation but what your own religion and philosophy teach an hundred times better than those maxims which even when the motive cannot be doubted serve but to aggravate instead of allaying the feelings of affection wounded as yours. Would to God it were in my power to say or do any thing which could amuse Mrs. M. for judging from what you say much of the disorder necessarily lies on the nerves and might

perhaps be subject to be occasionally relieved by amusement. At any rate I am sure if Mrs. M. sees how much you suffer and you are not the sort of person to conceal it unless by busying yourself in speaking or reading your distress is the most likely thing to add to her disorder. You must therefore put a constraint on yourself while she is undergoing a painful process which I trust will end in restoration of her health and if you think that by writing frequently or sending you the trifles of the day I could aid you in a task so painful I will be the most faithful correspondent you ever had in your life. Poor Walter who has not forgot Mrs. Morritts kindness of last year turnd quite pale and then red and then broke into tears and ran from table when he heard she was very unwell which was great feeling for a rough High-school boy.¹ I need not say how much Mrs. Scott shares in all your distress. It takes away great part of my wish to see London this spring unless I heard Mrs. Morritt were getting better and will be an additional motive for my wishing to take a short tour upon the continent which will be open to us if these wonderfull good news continue. Pray inquire after my letter if you have not received it. There may be things in it which I should not like to fall into other hands. The Ballantynes are doing very well and extricating themselves both with honour and profit from their engagements. If any delay has arisen in the remittance it can only be from the snow as I saw it sent off: but our late letters have been very irregular owing to the weather—

I do not send any compliments to Mrs. M. because you must not read her this letter but you will not doubt

¹ In acknowledging this letter Morritt writes: "I shall love Walter as long as I live for his kind hearted affectionate sympathy & regard for Catherine; such warm and generous feeling must have given you the highest pleasure. This it is my dear friend to cultivate as you do in all the domestic charities of life the unsophisticated feelings that give character and dignity to our nature and to see them repaid by those from whom you look for future sympathy and support."

my best and most friendly wishes as well as Charlottes.
Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 15 *January* 1814.

[*Law*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

CASTLE STREET, *Thursday* [20th *January* 1814]

DEAR CONSTABLE,—I enclose Wood's halfpenny¹—also a drawing of a medal in honour of the Dean, and a fine drawing of his favourite seal. I think the two first should be engraved, and I wish the inscription, as the gift of Dr. Hill, to be retained. There is a drop of ink on the hair but the artist will attend to that. I send also the music of a burlesque Cantata made by the Dean, which I think should be preserved. I trust we will be out in a fortnight or three weeks, if I could but get these damned letters,² which would add £500 value to the book in *name*, not perhaps in reality.—Yours truly—

W. S.

I will look in tomorrow.

[*Rosebery and Kilpatrick*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I send you the half of the Letters beginning at p. 25. They only require to be copied in a distinct hand & accurately collated written on one side only for the sake of Notes.

¹ Dr. E. J. Hill writes from Dublin, 8th December 1812, asking for information regarding Patrick Hume, the first commentator on *Paradise Lost*: "His successors have scarcely mentioned him, or have treated him very slightly . . . though they have not scrupled to pillage him &c." He has sent by "Mr. Caddel" a copy of the most authentic picture of Swift and an engraving of Wood's halfpenny.

² The letters to Vanessa. They were printed with other letters which had come in late in an Appendix to the Correspondence, *Works*, vol. xix. The Cantata I have not traced.

I return Beddoes volumes ¹ long since borrowd through your means for the sake of this work, and I also send two proofs which I wish you to forward to Messrs. Ramsay as the bearer may blunder. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

Wednesday, CASTLE STREET [*Feb.* 1814]
[*Rosebery and Kilpatrick*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—Swift is in Ramsays hands & I trust will proceed without interruption. I am as anxious as you to get him out this season & as early as possible. I beg you will pick me up two small volumes calld *Swiftiana* ² publishd by Philips about ten years since which is more authentic than I was aware of. I am Dear Sir your obedt. Servant

EDINR. 4 *feby* [1814]

WALTER SCOTT

Mr. Constable 10 Bridge Street
Blackfriars London

[*Stevenson*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

[*7th Feb.* 1814]

MY DEAR SIR,—I gave James *my very last farthing* yesterday & cannot get money in any way untill tomorrow. I am utterly astonishd at such a mistake happening but

¹ Scott had possibly consulted the Works of Beddoes (1760-1808) the physician, and father of the poet, in connection with Swift's health and sanity: "The distinguishing merit of his medical writings is their vivid presentation of the phenomena of disease."—*D.N.B.*

² *Swiftiana* . . . printed for Richard Phillips, 71 St. Paul's Church Yard, 1804. A small work in 2 vols. made up of a sketch of Swift's life; a series of numbered (I. II. etc.) paragraphs giving anecdotes of Swift and others connected with him; and a letter from Theophilus Swift, "London, October 27, 1803." The name *Swiftiana* is also given to a small tract containing "Poems by Dean Swift," London, 1727, of which there is a copy in the Abbotsford Library.

I should suppose Mr. Constable as it is a matter in which I am immediately concernd would give you assistance & there would be no difficulty in replacing the money in the course of a day or two—

W. S.

You must just bustle about among your friends to meet the pinch this evening & let me know your success.

Recd. of Messr. Constable & Co in terms of this letter £250

Private Mr. John Ballantyne ¹

[*Stevenson*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

[8 February 1814]

DEAR CONSTABLE,—As friend John will be in his pulpit² I inclose you a cheque for the £250 you were so good as to advance him. Please to let it be *one o'clock* before you send it over as I have a large sum to receive today which I wish to pay in before making so heavy a draught as the inclosed. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

Mr. Archibald Constable

[*Stevenson*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR SIR,—I am truly vexed and grieved at your having had so much plague and trouble about my money matters and I hasten to put a close to them as fast as is in my power. Ballantyne says he can easily pay the money in seventy five days, when he will have large sums. This will make your trouble less than with the larger bill you now hold ;¹ I therefore enclose his bill for £535, which will I presume be readily discountable in the beginning of

¹ This letter is endorsed in another hand : “ Recd. of Messrs. Constable & Co. in terms of this letter £250—John Ballantyne.

² As auctioneer.

March, to meet the acceptance you have so kindly granted. I am the worst accomptant in the world, but I begged Jo: Ballantyne so to calculate that you might have the whole charge included ; if he has made a mistake, it can be easily corrected by a remittance from hence. You may return the £700 Bill when the other is put into circulation, or keep it till I advise you that this is duly retired, as to which there will be no trouble or inconvenience. Once more accept my best thanks for this very unpleasant trouble, which, could I have conceived your having the half of it . . . ¹ but I am the more indebted to you. I have been very busy arranging the *whole letters* between Cadenus and Vanessa ; there is a treat for you—yet they will not gratify public Curiosity ; great love on the Lady's side ; much apology and excuse on that of the Gentleman. The Memoir is finished and very near printed. Pray oblige me by making out a list of the Gentlemen to whom I have given so much trouble in the course of it— I have had some copies of the Memoir thrown off, of which I should beg their acceptance—I have a full set of the works for you, and another for Mr Berwick, who favoured me with such valuable materials as the above correspondence—Every thing will be out in March, and I hope early— Your last book was most acceptable, and contained several things which I am decidedly of opinion belong to the Dean—particularly one or two squibs respecting the Bank— I must close this letter, being unwilling to lose a post with the enclosure— Tomorrow or next day, I will write you more at large—this being as Men of business say, *to the matter*. We have been almost closed up by snow ; there is a perfect Glaciere at Abbotsford, which stands a chance of lasting till next July, if as I hope you will then come

¹ Some words must have been dropped in the copy, such as " I should have hesitated to involve you." All Scott's friends had been, apparently, to some extent involved in the effort of 1813—Morritt, Hartstonge, the Duke, Charles Erskine, etc.

and see it— Mrs. Scott and the little Folks beg all their kind remembrances. Ever your's most truly

EDINR 10th Febry 1814.

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO MISS SMITH

MY DEAR MISS SMITH,—I wrote you a long letter of four pages four weeks ago at least and faithfully addressed it to Manchester Square. I should be sorry it miscarried for to say truth I joked a little about your favour with Royalty &c &c. If you will send to Mr. Freeling who is an excellent friend of mine he will make some enquiries about it I dare say. Nothing can give me more pleasure than to hear of your increasing fame and prosperity and I know you will keep all the friends you make which is a more difficult art than acquiring them. My present employments are all of a very prosaic kind. The whole summer I spent digging levelling draining and planting trees at Abbotsford which is the name of my little farm about three miles above Selkirk lying along the banks of the Tweed. It will be a pretty place one day whoso may live to see it. Our house is the least that ever harboured decent folks since the traditionary couple who lived in the Vinegar bottle. But if you come here in Summer we will find a corner for you, and there are delightful walks and fine views in our neighbourhood.

I am not writing any-thing just now, and indeed have no thoughts of doing so for some time for [I] should tire of writing and what is worse though your politeness or rather let me say your partiality may contradict me people would unquestionably tire of reading. I have some thoughts of going upon the continent this spring if circumstances should render it convenient during the recess of our courts of justice but if it should not be safe or comfortable travelling I will be in town for a month to see what is going on among you. Since the winter

set in I have been busy completing my edition of Swift for which I have made some curious collections particularly all the love letters which passed between him and Vanessa. They will disappoint the world however for Swift had no tenderness in his composition.

There never was such a season for excess of cold and snow. The roads are blocked up in every direction and the post finds its way with great danger and difficulty. At one time we had four posts due from London to the great impatience of our newsmongers in these bustling times. I hope when you next go to Windsor you will visit the place where Hearne's oak stood—it was I believe cut down within the memory of man which was a great pity as it made classic ground. Charlotte and the little people are all well, and desire kind compliments. We understand you often see our valuable friends in White House Street Piccadilly. Pray make my kind compliments to them. Believe me very very truly Yours faithfully and respectfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 13 Feb. 1814.

I must not forget to say that I have a letter from Miss Baillie to whom you wished to be known and that she is very much disposed to embrace the opportunity of being acquainted which as she is a shy person as well as a woman of the highest genius is no small compliment. If you leave your card for her at Hampstead I am sure she will take it very kind. From various delays I have not finished this letter half so soon as I expected.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO GEORGE THOMSON

DEAR SIR,—I beg pardon for not returning the proof,¹ which had really escaped my remembrance. I beg you will erase the verse you dislike ; indeed I think the only improvement possible would be to erase the whole, being

¹ Thomson has written on the manuscript : " Walter Scott, Esq., returning a proof of his song—The British Light Dragoons."

sad trash, and a little out of date into the bargain. Yours
Sincerely

W. S.

CASTLE STREET

[Thomson docket : "22d Feby. 1814"]

[*British Museum*]

To JOHN BALLANTYNE

[Copy]

DEAR JOHN—I have been thinking over the plan which I have lately formed and talked over this morning, of making our good Stock carry off our heavy by attaching so much of it to future editions, of *moving* publications so far as they have not already paid at all of that nature, & which must clear the stock in time while we enjoy the benefit of credit upon print and paper of the new editions at the same time, and make [terms¹] advantageous both to us and the Booksellers. But it has occurred to me that there is a better and more summary mode of winding up and which would effectually end these matters.

Suppose Constable & Longman would take our whole Stock (say £10,000 being £5000 each) at the following terms—

| | |
|--|---------|
| Bills for 12 mos. to immediately granted for | £2000 |
| Do. — fifteen months - - - - | £2000 |
| Do. — Eighteen mos - - - - | £2000 |
| Do. — twenty one months - - - - | £2000 |
| Do. — twenty four months - - - - | £2000 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £10,000 |

Should they be disposed to do this J. B. & Coy shut shop instantly and leave the field clear turning over to the purchasers the works of every description which they have now the advantage of publishing—on the sale terms of printing in the Canongate and giving the authors half profits—I am morally convinced that with the literary

¹I supply "terms." The blank is in the manuscript.

views I have before me there will not be nearly so much advance of credit or capital as the Booksellers part in this way as in that which I had settled—I wish if this strikes you as a feasible proposal to make our friends you would come up to breakfast tomorrow—subordinate parts of the plan can easily be settled should the general principle suit—and it will render the Lond. journey unnecessary—In future publications, unless in very particular circumstances, or with reasonable grounds of displeasure which there is no chance of occurring, I will certainly consider these houses as my publishers expecting only in courtesy some share of their countenance in P.O.¹ As I shall always publish in future for half profits there is no fear of my having the least temptation to change publishers supposing me to have (as I have not) any wish to do so—I think within the same period the Booksellers will probably take off the same quantity of Stock upon the former plan but this would cut the matter short and promises I think advantages to both parties. Yours etc.

W. S.

Sunday, 3 o'clock (26 Feby 1814)²

[*Stevenson*]

TO HAY DONALDSON

[*March 1814*]

MY DEAR SIR,—The enclosed Scheme³ seems quite correct. I enclose a letter from Mr. Keith who is satisfied with the accompts as he cannot be otherwise. Hoping it will suit you I will send a note to the Doctor to fix hour

¹ *i.e.* Printing office.

² On this day Scott wrote a long letter to one John Swinton, Northwich, who had consulted him about the connection of English and Scottish Swintons, a letter in which Scott sketched the history of his Swinton ancestors. The letter is lost but J. S. replied on 4th March, and the subject is referred to in a later letter to a Swinton cousin, p. 460.

³ What the scheme was I have not been able to discover. Hay Donaldson was Scott's man of business and was probably settling matters connected with Tom and Daniel.

tomorrow rather than Tuesday to meet Mr. Keith and you can have a proper minute scrolled. Meantime I have a pressing letter this morning from my sister-in-law to whom I must send a remittance which I must take out of Danls. share and I have some little affairs of my own which I should also be glad to settle when I go to the bank tomorrow. Will you have the goodness therefore to send a cheque for £550. The rest may lie over till I get the receipts and all the tackle settled.

[Griffith]

TO JOHN RICHARDSON

[Fragmentary]

and you will do me a great favour by putting my brother in the way of recovering what may be due to him—

I am much obliged to Captain Fielding for remembering his kind offer of a Japanese broadsword. The best mode of transportation I believe would be to clap it in a box and send it by sea but there is no hurry in the matter if you will give house room to so terrible a weapon. I hardly think I shall be in town this season though I am not quite determined. I have but little to do among you but to see my friends and their number is not great. I picked up at a sale the other day Rodds Spanish Ballads.¹ I have hardly seen any thing more execrable than the poor man's translations. I have some thought of pasting blank paper over every one of them for it is impossible to read the original with comfort in their vicinity. I had a letter a few days since from your amiable neighbour² on the heath. I fear she is obdurate in her intentions to write no more. The limited popularity of her dramas is a great slur upon the taste of the age. Adieu my dear

¹ Thomas Rodd (the Elder) : *Ancient Ballads from the Civil Wars of Grenada, and the Twelve Peers of France*, London, 1801. British Museum Catalogue.

² Joanna Baillie.

Richardson remember me to your Lady unknown &
believe me truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 2 March 1814

Have you seen this Mr. Kean of whom we hear so much?

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

[PM. March 4, 1814]

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I have not heard from you some time and am too much interested in the state of affairs with you not to be anxious. Pray let us know how Mrs. Morritt is and whether the new regimen agrees with her. I think there is little chance of my getting over to Holland—it would be uncomfortable travelling while the French have any of the strongholds and a non-combattant who might get snap'd up would look not a little foolish. I trust there will be soon an end to this obstacle for I understand the Dutch are proceeding very cautiously and wisely in the formation of a representative legislation instead of their old federation which is the worst of systems in the neighbourhood of an ambitious neighbour and that like stout fellows they are going to hire six or eight Swiss regiments as they used to do the Scotch Dutch as they call'd them in former times. So being organized and armed I hope they will soon rid themselves of their unpleasant circumstances.

Jeffery is return'd here with his bride very gay and very full of news. He had a grand skirmish with Maddison¹ of which he gave me a very diverting account. He describes the president as being an exceedingly mean looking little man who met him with three little ducking bows and then extended a yellow witherd hand to him

¹ See Cockburn's *Life of Jeffrey* for an account of this skirmish, chiefly concerning the British search of American ships for deserters from the navy.

like an old ducks foot. After these symptoms of fraternization he proceeded to question the critic very solemnly touching the nature of the sensations which the American war excited in the British public. To which Jeffery replied in his best poco-curante stile, that he believed nobody thought any thing at all about the American war in Britain and that he thought it likely that many well informd people did not know that we were at war at all. Something he said he had heard about it at Liverpool and once or twice when we heard of a frigate we used to wonder for a day and then think no more about it. He then gave battle on the principle of the war saying that we only exercised the rights of nations and that if America wanted a new international code it was her business to propose such a one as might suit both parties since otherwise we must [keep] going on exercising the acknowledged right vested in us by the law of nations and defending ourselves when attackd so that the war was quite defensive on our part—this Maddison told him very bitterly was a mere verbal pleasantry. Jeffery says Maddison is a mortal enemy to this country and has been prophesying for four or five years past that every year would be the last of Britains greatness. He adds too that Maddison and his ministry are heartily tired of the war and would fain *back out* of it if they could do so without giving great advantages to the other party. I think he has returnd a much better subject than he went away but when Brougham and Horner tutor him a little I suppose he will hold his old tenets. He is very violent against peace with Bonaparte if the Allies are disposed to carry on the war to his utter destruction. On the other hand he told me this morning that he thought it would be very unreasonable to blame ministers for acceding to the best peace they could get if the Court of Austria would not proceed with the war. I own I wish either to see peace or an explicit declaration that the Bourbons were to be restored. I understand this

last was Moreaus plan and was adjusted before he left. His loss has been an incredible damage to the cause and so is the ambiguity of the Allies conduct. Do you ever hear from Stanley and what is he saying to it? All our loves attend you and Mrs. Morritt whom I devoutly hope this letter will find still improving in health pray let me have a line soon. Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

I have had a Capt. Rokeby introduced to me—a Northampton gentleman and descended from the old Lords of your manor.

[*Law*]

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

N.D. [*? March 1814*]

NOTHING could be more wellcome my dear Morritt than your two last letters announcing a lightening in the domestic horizon lately so unhappily overclouded. I trust your new regimen for our dear friend will succeed and that she will be supported by the state of your hopes and spirits. In the strange and inexplicable combination of our body and soul the former is much supported even in the most trying circumstances by the elasticity of the mind and I know Mrs. Morritts feelings will depend much upon yours even during this period of extreme weakness. It is wonderful how stomach complaints assume forms capable of deceiving the best medical men. My friend Rutherford of Edgerstane languishd for two years under a disease with the most alarming symptoms faintings cold sweats total loss of appetite perpetual and most oppressive headaches and low fever. He found a physician however at Bath who discovered that the cause of all this misery were some obstructions which he contrived to remove by severe medicine and to my great pleasure I find my old friend as lively active and able to drink a glass of claret as ever he was in his life. It is the

most extraordinary recovery I ever witnessd and shews how the worst symptoms may give way to proper treatment when the radical cause of mischief is once fairly ascertaind.

We have had here the most severe snowy storm I ever witnessd excepting 1795. The London Mails were stopd for four days a circumstance almost unheard of and they still come irregularly. Two Russians friends of Lord Pembroke who lived a good deal with us were the loudest in their complaints of the cold weather and astonishd to see everybody enduring it without furs. The eldest a *Mons. Politica* (an excellent name for a diplomatist which is his profession) is a very well informd and pleasant man and has been over the whole world I believe. His companion is a very good and pleasant young man a *Mons. Severin* son of the Minister of Justice at Petersburg. There is little chance of your meeting them in the present circumstances but should it so happen I think you will like them. Have you observed in the *Courier* a very magnificent account of the Battle of Leipsic by an eyewitness—not a military detail but what is more interesting to a non-combattant the general impression received by a distant spectator of this tremendous scene. I have written to London for the pamphlet which if it corresponds with the Extract must be one of the most interesting I ever read. It has all the materials for painting or poetry richly scatterd through it. Pray send for it if you have not already perused it and let me have your opinion.

I send you inclosed an etching done from the life¹ by my

¹ Sharpe's etching of Madame de Staël is reproduced in his *Correspondence*, ii, opposite p. 100. Underneath is etched :

Corinne se consume en efforts superflus

La Vertu n'en veut pas, le Vice n'en veut plus.

She was much lionised in London during the year 1813 and there are numerous references to her in the letters of Byron and others. Crabb Robinson was granted, in French fashion, an interview with her in her bedroom.

friend Charles Sharpe. You dont know him I think but Lady Louisa does. The likeness you will readily recognise at least so I am told for I never saw Corinne. Dont say you got it from me as I have no wish to commit myself with a Lady of such literary distinction and who besides threatens us with a visit here where I may probably have the curiosity to see her at least though only from curiosity. As for her proneur Sir Jemmy I know him of old—he cannot like many of his countrymen have left his conscience at the Cape of Good Hope in going out to India and forgot it as he came homeward—for I doubt much if he carried such an incumbrance with [him] when he first crossd the Tweed for your grand emporium of talents of all kinds.

As your conscience has very few things to answer for you must still burthen it with the secret of the Bridal. It is spreading very rapidly and I have one or two little faery romances which will make a second volume and which I would wish publishd but not with my name. The truth is that this sort of muddling work amuses me and I am something in the condition of Joseph Surface who was embarassd by getting himself too good a reputation for many things would please people well enough anonymously which if they bore me on the title page would just give me that sort of ill name which precedes hanging which would be in many respects inconvenient if I thought of again trying a grande opus. I will give you an hundred good reasons when we meet for not owning the Bridal till I either secede entirely from the field of literature or from that of life.

Poor Weber could not have intruded upon you—he is, I find, and I am glad to find it, put under medical restraint for some time which I have not the least doubt will bring him round. It is a most melancholy business and I fear has been helpd by distress.

We are raising a Subscription (horrid word) for a monument to Burns : an honour long delayd perhaps

till some parts of his character were forgotten by those among whom he lived. I am anxious to forward it and if you think you can get me a few guineas among your acquaintance when you begin to go about a little I will send you a copy of the resolutions. The situation is a very fine one and if the subscription is successful of which I have little doubt it will be a credit to the country and a great ornament to Dumfries. There are few people who do not owe a guinea or two to Burns' memory for the pleasure his works have afforded them.

What a scene Stanley is now witnessing¹—I hope he keeps a journal and makes memorandm. of all that comes under his eyes both as to the useful curious and picturesque. I wish our prisoners could be deliverd at Verdun. I think if a polt² of Cossacks were promised a thousand pounds or so from the patriotic fund they would contrive to redeem them. Jock of the Side, Wat of Harden or any of our Border moss troopers a kind of Cossacks in their way would have made a good hand of such a job. The Courier is wise and mysterious on the subject of the French Princes—South North and—the white standard is to be raised—What the Devil is—Do they mean Paris? Charlotte sends a thousand kind wishes to Mrs. Morritt. Yours ever

W. SCOTT

[Law]

TO CHARLES ERSKINE

DEAR CHARLES,—I am still kept at this cursed town though the weather is now so inviting but I have to sign at the Register House untill the 12 April when I expect to have the rest of the vacation quiet at Abbotsford.

¹ "Stanley is well and at Munich eating & waltzing like a thorough-paced German. He describes every class in Germany as burning w. indignation agst Napoleon & rushing to arms much faster than arms or officers can be found."—MORRITT.

² Scott writes 'polt'; I believe 'polk' is the correct form.

I send out my last process. Also a letter from Mr. Boyd—whose apology may be sustained.

I also enclose a settlement to your accot. for £300 paid into B: of Scotland which mark to account. My cash is coming back first so I shall crawl out of your debt entirely in a few weeks with many thanks for the accomodation which I hope has not inconvenienced you.

I give you joy on these rare news but I think it will end in a peace with Boney. I only trust they will draw his jaw teeth and make a strong offensive & defensive alliance against him in time to come. Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 20th March [1814]

[Curle]

To JOHN RICHARDSON

MANY thanks to you my dear Richardson for your kind exertions in my behalf.¹ The case is excellent and from all that our best lawyers say here I cannot expect the opinion of Sir S Romilly &c to differ from those high authorities you have already consulted. You may rely upon my making no improper use of Mr. Alexander's most obliging card— There will be no harm I presume in shewing it *privately* to the Chief Baron as a friend. The curse of these Exchequer questions is that they hover between a ministerial and judicial character but we must do the best we can—

Young David Anderson the Advocate takes charge of this letter—he seems to be a nice young man though I don't know him much— If he calls on the strength of having taken this letter you will oblige me by assisting him in the gratification of any curiosity he may entertain concerning literary or professional objects of enquiry—

It will be of course prudent to let the Major's enquiries

¹ See letter to Richardson of September-October 1813 relative to income tax on literary earnings.

rest. Of all funds re-funding is the worst as Joe Miller says because I did not say it first— I haste[n] to conclude for the carriage waits to take us to see Jo Kemble play Brutus— How dye like Kean of whom we hear so much?

I am almost glad Mrs. Baillie (puisque *Mistress* il y a) is gone to Wales. It diminishes my regret at not coming to London. I'll have a frisk with you though if the Emperor of Russia & the King of Prussia come over. Ever yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

23 March 1814

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO MESSRS. LONGMAN AND CO.¹

[Extract]

March 28 [1814]

MR. CONSTABLE mentioned to me some time ago that you wished to have some introductory matter to the *Border Antiquities*—a name that is I suppose to help them off. I gave him then my reason why I could not undertake an introduction of a formal nature, because I really have exhausted all that I could say upon the subject in a general point of view in the Introduction to the *Border Minstrelsy*—so that any thing of that kind

¹ The exact date of this letter is rather puzzling. On 7th March 1816, Longman & Co. wrote to Scott expressing their disappointment that he has not favoured them with introductory matter of 70 or 80 pages, "as stated in your letter of 28th March 1814," to be entitled "*Illustrations of remarkable incidents in Border History by Walter Scott Esq.*" They also add that they are enclosing "a copy of such part of your letter 28th March 1814 as relates to the *Border Antiquities*." But the copy (here given) was mistakenly dated by them 28th March 1816. In the prefatory note to Vol. I. of *The Border Antiquities* (1814) it is stated that the proprietors of the work have "pleasure to say, that in the next seven Parts will be included illustrations of remarkable incidents in Border History and Tradition, with original poetry by Walter Scott, Esq." This statement, taken in conjunction with Messrs. Longmans' references, point to the date of this letter being most likely 1814.

would be a mere repetition. But I have some illustrations of individual subjects of Border tradition and history both in prose and verse upon the Battle of Otterburne, the Fight at Dryfe Sands, and some other matters which might run out to about 70 or 80 pages. These might be entitled *Illustrations of remarkable incidents in Border History & Tradition by W. Scott*. But there would be two things indispensable ; the one that any poetry I might incline to use should remain my own property unless in so far as new Editions of the Border Antiquities in 4to. might be required—because I design some loose things to make a volume one day or other with Don Roderick. The other that some small expence should be allowed for the engraving of the Douglas's Banner & one or two other decorations in the way of ornament. Mr. C. mentioned 200 as the copy money of an Introduction. What I propose will answer your purpose better (if you return the wish)—say 210£ the Bills granted on publication at 6 mos. & renewed at my expence for 6 months or for 12 mos. as most agreeable to you. When I mention ornaments I mean vignettes. If this is not agreeable to your views I believe I shall reserve these things either for a fourth volume of the Minstrelsy, or for adding to a new edition of Don Roderick when the present is out. There is no hurry in your decision.¹

[*Walpole Collection—Copy*]

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO

EDINBURGH, 3 April 1814

MY DEAR SIR,—Immediately upon coming to town, I enquired after your papers, having previously done so by letter, and had the satisfaction to learn that they had been sent to your address in London, and arrived safe.

¹ The transcriber's note is to the effect that the other part of this letter related solely to *Mori Arthur*.

I have been considering the subject you propose for historical composition. It is certainly a desideratum in Scottish story, and I should be delighted to see it in your hands ; but there is a woeful deficiency of materials. Boethius is altogether fabulous ; and to follow him, as Buchanan has done, would only be adding to exploded error. Something might be gleaned from the English Chronicles, and a good deal from old Wintown and Barlowe. But I apprehend the only way to get at something like historical fact, would be to consult the few records which remain of that early period. These, indeed, are very few, have suffered much, and are not over and above legible. They consist of charters, and of various rolls and chamberlains' accompts, kept by our monarchs and their officers of state. If these were carefully examined, I am convinced much fable might be corrected by the application of dates to facts, and perhaps some important truths recovered. Lord Hailes was the first who introduced accuracy into Scottish history. All who precede him may be considered as absolutely legendary. There is, therefore, a fair field for patient and persevering research and industry, and I have not the least doubt that, should you think so seriously of the task as to make Edinburgh your residence for the time necessary to collect these scattered materials, every facility of access will be afforded you. Indeed, my own official situation, which is collaterally connected with that of the Lord Register, puts something in my power ; and Mr. Thomson, the Deputy Register, is a man of most liberal disposition and great historical knowledge. But I fear that, without a residence of many months in this place, very little could be done ; and I should rejoice to think this were possible for you, as I should then have the pleasure to improve our epistolary into personal acquaintance. But I doubt whether your other avocations will permit your making so great a sacrifice to your literary pursuits.

I take the liberty to send you a copy of a poem I lately published, but which was originally in rather a cumbrous form to be transmitted so many hundred miles. Believe me, dear Sir, yours very truly and respectfully,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, 1832]

TO JAMES SCOTT WALKER, AT COLLEGE MAIN, DUMFRIES ¹

SIR,—I am honored with your letter & I assure you it is not from any unfavourable opinion that I wish to decline the dedication you do me the honor to propose. But such a compliment ought not to be accepted without a careful reflection how far it is possible to make any return for it. In this respect I am particularly disabled as I live entirely out of the circle of the world and with persons whose fortune is as limited as my own and who not having the same claims on them are not readily induced to be subscribers.

I cannot help saying that as the emolument of publication is an object it is most likely to be allowed by an account of the present state of the Spanish Main however slight if lively and authentic to which any part of your poems may be occasionally attached. Such a work engages a much more numerous circle of readers than a collection of miscellaneous poems for which in the present times it might be difficult *a priori* to find an adequate subscription whereas the other from the views of commercial people and the curiosity of idle students forms an object of much more general interest. If your memoranda enable you to make out such a volume I think you

¹ The only works I can find attributed to James Scott Walker in the *British Museum Catalogue* are an essay on education (1825), an account of the Liverpool to Manchester railway (1831), and of the same with a memoir of Mr. Huskisson, who was killed at the opening (1831). But the *Abbotsford Library Catalogue* (p. 164) records J. S. Walker's *South American, a Metrical Tale, etc.*, Edin., 1816. This is probably the "intended work."

may find it not only an immediate source of advantage but if well executed and popular the means of employment and confidence. Excuse my endeavouring to point out an opening to you and impute it to my wish to express my sense of your good opinion. The specimen inclosed of your verses is most respectable and argues a well-cultivated mind and good powers of expression. I should be sorry [if] you turned these away from the study of poetry but you ought to consider that a character in that art only is but the high wave which throws the boat on the beach and often leaves it there *high and dry*.

I beg at any rate you will put me down for four copies of your intended work and that you will take in good part hints which I am not in the habit of offering unless where I sincerely think they may be useful. I am, Sir, Your obliged Servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 11 *April* 1814

[*Brotherton*]

TO ROBERT PEARCE GILLIES

DEAR SIR,—I return you with kind thanks the Irish tour which is lively though vulgar & the novel which has a good deal of power in it though written by an author woefully deficient in knowledge of Costume & manners. When you meet a good novel you will oblige me by recommending it as though very fond of these fiction I seldom see them but on a friend's recommendations. Believe me Dear Sir Very much yours,

W. S.

Tuesday Evening [1814]

I suppose Child Alaric will be out by my return to Castle Street on Monday.

[*Maggs*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

ABBOTSFORD 12th April 1814

MY DEAR SIR,—¹ . . . Swift after all is not *quite* finished, but very *very* nearly so—it is astonishing what a number of things are necessary to finish a work, which one never thinks of till they are getting it out of their hands, and to say the truth, the current of good news with the uncertainty which preceded it, has for some weeks so agitated and so stirred me, that Quidnunc the Upholsterer in the Farce,² would have been as fit for an Editor— My own eyes have seen that which I had scarcely hoped my Son's should see, the downfall of the most accursed and relentless military despotism³ that ever wasted the blood and curbed the faculties of a civilized people.—I should have as soon expected the blade of a sword to bear a crop of corn, on its polished and hardened side, as any good or liberal institution to flow from Bonaparte. If he survives the ruin he has created, and it is strange he should even wish to survive it—it will be no slight proof of the Civilization of our age, which does not follow with private revenge even the most atrocious criminal. I should wish him to survive to teach a school in America, or to help President Maddison to discipline his Continental Warriors—I have a notion the said President is in danger of getting what the Blackguards call a proper *hiding*. The moderation of the Allied Princes has something peculiarly graceful in it—and gives much lustre by the contrast between lawful rule, and right supremacy, compared to military usurpation—. But I will not enlarge upon this topic, though it has been so near my heart for so many weeks—the joy in Edinr. is immeasurable—The mob always strong upon the stronger side, fell upon some grotesque modes of marking the dwellings of those who

¹ A few sentences of further acknowledgment of the financial aid given in the previous year are omitted.

² Abraham Quidnunc, the bankrupt upholsterer, in Murphy's *The Upholsterer* (1758).

³ Napoleon's first abdication, which happened in this month.

were considered as Friends to Bonny. One man's door they painted with tears like a hearse— To return to Swift, Constable has played me a dogs trick in neglecting to throw off the extra copies of the *Life*, which will deprive me of that mode of testifying my gratitude to my Irish Friends—I shall find some other I hope soon ; he is much grieved about the matter himself—and has placed four copies at my disposal, of the entire work, which I intend to distribute to you, to Mr. Theophilus Swift, Dr. Hill & another person who has claims on me. The engraving of Swift is beautifully executed from the drawing you sent to me. And I hope the whole edition will not discredit your continued friendship and actions in its favour— I shall transmit also for your kind acceptance the 1st Vol: *Northern Antiquities*, a very learned work, conducted by two Friends, whom I would be glad to serve, and to whose work I have added something.

You will hardly expect I should send you news from this place, for it would not avail much to tell you that the acorns are growing, or that I have been working all day to make up the breaches made on my domains, by the ice of last winter—which assembled like a clustered glaciére, at the head of the Haugh—I missed the sight, but I am told it was extremely grand—My Sister-in-Law is gone to Halifax,¹ and without receiving letters from my

¹ Hartstonge in his letters to Scott reports the kindness shown by friends of his own in Cork to Mrs. Tom Scott, whose husband had been ordered with his regiment to Canada. Tom's humour and colloquial pleasantry had made him his brother's favourite since they were young and none of the trouble he had caused ever weakened Scott's affection. "I never laughed sae muckle at any period o' my life as I hae dune wi' his brother Tam and him at their father's house in Edinburgh. It was just fun upon fun, and who to be the daftest the hail afternoon. Tam was out o' sight the best laugher I ever met wi'. . . . Their father was exceedingly fond and indulgent apparently and seemed to enjoy our mirth mightily and sat and hotched on his chair."—Robert Shortreed as reported by his son F. E. Shortreed, 1824. Mrs. Tom writes on 25th March that she has drawn on Scott for £60. She had written to this effect and hopes his letters are on the way, but has been ordered off in a great hurry, being "to embark on board the Lord St Helens Transport on Monday with Jessie Ann and Walter. . . . I did not expect to sail till the second week of April. . . the kindness of Lord & Lady Forbes has been of the utmost consequence."

Mother and me, which as it happens was singularly unlucky. I am infinitely obliged by the kind attention of your Friends, to Mrs. Scott in her very unpleasant situation ; if my Brother had been there, he would have paid it, by his own good humour, and colloquial pleasantry ; in which he used to exceed any man I ever met with— Pray let me hear your particular news—I hope it means that you are going to make yourself a Benedict ; I know few people who are more calculated to be happy in domestic life, and therefore sincerely hope I have made the right guess— Charlotte is here with me, and more than proud enough of her shamrocks, I promise you— They have been exceedingly admired in Edinr. and do great honor to the ingenuity of the workman. She begs her kind Compts and best thanks— All the children are left in Town, and my eyes are almost closing upon these blotted pothooks. Yrs. Most Truly W. SCOTT.

P.S. in the Volume you were last kind enough to send, I think the letter to S. R. W. (Sir Robert Walpole) is clearly Swift's, the other tract not, because it refers chiefly to London—I conceive it may have been written by De Foe.—

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO MISS SOPHIA SCOTT

[PM. 15 April 1814]

MY DEAR FIA,—We come to town tomorrow to dinner. You must get the little tin things to hold the candles. We shall need a great many—as many as there are panes in the front of the House which you can count with Miss Millars assistance. I should like to have them in readiness as it will be three o'clock before we can possibly get in at soonest. Yours truly and affectionately

W. SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD *Thursday*

Menie says there are a great many of these tin things in the kitchen closet in a paper bag. So you need only buy what are wanted.

[Law]

TO CHARLES ERSKINE

[22nd April 1814]

DEAR CHARLES,—In coming back today I questiond Will Purdie & learnd that Brown had been at his house and left it about seven at night. He then wore a short blue coat.—It is certainly remarkable that this very man should have left Boldside just about the time that Boyd was setting out from Fairnalie & what Scotts wife mentiond to Ormstoun of Browns having heard a conversation between Paterson & Sanderson and Boyd at Selkirk fair is not renderd less suspicious by their now denying it providing it be certain She once mentiond the purport of the conversation as coming from her brother. I am anxious to know if you have pickd up any thing at Galashiels from Hislop Leech (?) or Rae to verify Browns Story of his being at Galashiels before eight o'clock. I cannot help thinking that if he be the criminal we may be able to detect him from the precision of his own narrative. Purdie says he seemd a little raised with liquor so as to be very chatty—Observe this also—Brown says he told Paterson the good news who did not believe him from which it must be inferd they were not then known in Selkirk. But if the boy Hume be correct he & his companions knew the good news before they set out on their walk consequently before Boyd was robbd. Surely by attending to some of these circumstances we may be able to confirm the story of Brown or to contradict it on sure grounds. I have been seldom more anxious about anything of the sort & I believe we must have a days precognition at Galashiels early next week.

Yours truly

W SCOTT

friday evening ABBOTSFORD

[Curle]

[A statement as to the robbery for the papers. Enclosed in the foregoing letter.]

We mentioned in a former paper the Robbery of Robt Boyd a Labourer at Fairnalee-haugh which was said to have happened in Selkirk Shire near Galasheils on the evening of the 12th Current about 8 o Clock—We are now authorised to state that the Sheriff Depute & Sheriff Substitute of the County have bestowed much time & trouble in investigating this matter—Boyd continues in Bed unable to come out of it as he says owing to the injury he has met with by the blows from the Robbers—The Medical Gentleman who attends him can perceive no external marks of any such violence & his Pulse is regular & right—In Boyds Declaration he states having gone to Hawick on purpose to receive money from a person there & that he accordingly did receive £15 with which he instantly returned home & when at home he added to it £14 : 9—making up a sum of £29 : 9 with which he set out to Galasheils to pay debts he owed Messrs. Sanderson & Paterson & another person there being the price of furniture—That altho' he had that day been at Hawick & walked 35 Miles or so he leaves his own House at 7 o Clock at night to go to Galasheils & return to his Bed making an addition of 7 or 8 Miles to a long days journey—This & other circumstances creating a suspicion as to the truth of Boyds story the Sheriff called at Hawick & took the Declaration of the person there from whom Boyd said he had received the £15 and from that Declaration it appears that the person said to have paid Boyd the money had not seen him for a year or two—Being now satisfied that Boyd had in so far fabricated a story the Sheriff again went to him when Boyd at first persisted in the truth of his first Declaration but afterwards put himself in the Sheriffs mercy for having told a falsehood about the money he said he had received at Hawick for that he had got none there—He still persists

that he was Robbed & beat & bruised and had he not been detected in one falsehood there are circumstances which rather give reason to presume he was Robbed—At the same time the matter is misterious & the probability is that no Robbery has been committed—If there was one the money taken was only £14 : 9 as Boyd now admits in place of £29 the sum he first said he had lost.

[Curle]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I should be very happy to try to do the Articles you want rather from the idea that I am complying with what will be agreeable to you than any other motive. They will not I presume need to be very long—that of Romance is so naturally connected with Chivalry¹ that it would be only one trouble to collect the information for both which indeed former studies have placed much at my fingers ends. The index & Contents are all which remain of Swift & I fancy are both almost off.²

If there be any clever account of the recent events in France in French or English (rather the former) I wish you could get me a copy for which or any thing you may have to send Mr. Freling or Mr. Croker Secy. to the Admiralty will give me a Cover.

I have been so busy here with one thing and another that I have hardly written a letter since my arrival. I am meditating some improvements particularly a room for my guests which will not remind them quite of an ascent to the Gallows as that you saw last year. If you

¹ Scott laid aside *Waverley* to write for the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* articles on Chivalry and on the Drama. See Lockhart.

² On 20th April Constable wrote to Cadell from London detailing a plan he proposed to Longmans for pushing the sale of Swift: "Had the work been completed three years ago when [the] Trade were mad about everything where Mr Scott's name appeared how very differently should we have stood in this business"; and on 2nd May: "The first volume of Swift disfigures the whole if anything can add to the *disfigurement* of this most vexatious of all Books. It has been a job to somebody and a damnable one to us."

hear any news in London I will be glad to know it for I am living like a sparrow on the House top. Yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 27 April [PM. 1814]

Archibald Constable Esq care of Mess. Longman & Co.
 Paternoster Row London

[Stevenson]

To JOHN BALLANTYNE ¹

[Extract]

28th April 1814

I have made up my mind, and arranged all my affairs, upon our last examination of the calendar, and I promise you I shall like very ill to be driven out to sea again. Why does not James hurry through the *Lady of the Lake*? but he is a true Spaniard, who will not mend his pace though the house were on fire. Jamieson's copy-money should have been entered in the calendar. Nothing has tended so much to cause and prolong the confusion of these affairs, as leaving out of view claims which ought to be paid, and are certain to be made.

[*Ballantyne-Humbug Handled*]

To MR. [JACOB] GRIMM, CASSEL ²

DEAR SIR,—Your very welcome letter reached me only yesterday. I am perfectly acquainted with what you

¹ For full version of this letter see vol. i. Appendix, p. 453.

² [“This letter by Sir Walter Scott was discovered, a short time since, among the papers of the late Wilhelm Grimm by his son, Herman Grimm, of Berlin. It is addressed simply to ‘Mr. Grimm, Cassel,’ and there is nothing to show for which of the brothers, Jacob or Wilhelm, it was intended.

“The references to Robert Owen, and to Brothers the Prophet—immortalized by Southey in the ‘Devil’s Walk’—are curious. So is the allusion to the probable ‘fall’ of Hamburg, and the fact that in 1814 a letter took three months to travel from Cassel to Edinburgh. We have changed all these things; but we have not abandoned that dislike to the German written character which forms so pathetic a postscript to Sir Walter’s letter.

“The *Einsiedler* mentioned near the close was, as Mr. Herman Grimm

have done for ancient German literature, to which my studies have in some measure been directed, so that I am no stranger to the rich field of ancient poetry which your country affords. The collection of Professor Müller (the property of a friend) has made me in some degree familiar with *Der alte Hildebrand*¹ and the other chivalrous heroes of the *Heldenbuch*. I owe the little knowledge I have on these subjects to the instructions of Mr. Henry Weber, a Saxon by birth, an unwearied investigator of the antiquities both of England and of his native country. He resided in Edinburgh until the beginning of last winter, when he left us to follow other prospects which occurred in England. You will probably receive a letter from him respecting what is doing in London in romantic

informs me, the *Einsiedlerzeitung*, a literary magazine to which his father and uncle contributed—and which had a year's existence only—in 1808.” —Ed. M.M.]

The letter is addressed to Jakob Grimm, who had written to Scott from “Cassel 4 Januar 1814” asking permission to correspond occasionally on various topics in Old English literature, as with Scottish, intimately connected with the study of Old German and Icelandic poetry and history. Each branch of the common tree may supply gaps in the other. The war had interrupted these studies, and only with difficulty had he secured *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake* and the *Minstrelsy*, but two copies of *Sir Tristram* had gone astray in the passage. Now that they breathe in freedom again they hope to secure the books they need, and he goes on to speak of Jamieson's two volumes of old ballads and of Ellis, Ritson, Weber. Ritson is dead. What have Ellis and Weber and Leyden or Douce done beyond what he knows of? How desirable it were to have, instead of unimportant Old English rhymes, an edition of the important MSS. of the Old French versions of King Horn and Tristan. He then proceeds to give a list of the works by himself and his brother. Has Owen's edition of the *Mabinogion* appeared? He especially wishes more knowledge of Scottish “*Volksaga*”—can Leyden help, or Douce?

Grimm wrote next from Paris on 9th June 1814, thanking Scott for this letter. He is at the embassy and working in the National Library. He thanks him for the books sent and will, when he returns, send those by himself and brother, especially his brother's translation of the Old Danish ballads, of which ballads a critical edition by Nyerup is preparing at Copenhagen. He goes on to speak of Swedish and Norse folklore, of the importance of retaining the old language in which any tale may be preserved, e.g. Plattdeutsch. Musäus's stories are moving, but the form French and witty, etc., etc.

¹ The first scholarly edition of *Hildebrandslied* was that of the brothers Grimm (1812).

lore. I have requested him to write to you, because while all I know is most sincerely at your service, he being *utriusque linguae doctor* and an enthusiast in German literature, may be able to communicate much that is curious and interesting which might escape me. Mr. Weber and Mr. Robert Jamieson undertook to publish a miscellaneous volume upon Northern antiquities, chiefly relating to those of Scandinavia and Northern Germany, to which I contributed an abridgment of the Eyrbyggja Saga. I will send you a copy with some other books, of which I beg leave to request your friendly acceptance. Mr. Robert Jamieson is still in Edinburgh, having a situation in the Register House. He also is an enthusiast in German literature, having long resided at Riga, where he had opportunities of studying it with advantage. Of the other persons concerning whom you inquire, I can also give you some account. My poor friend Leyden died of a fever after our troops had landed on Batavia, in the East Indies. He had distinguished himself latterly by the most extensive acquirements in Oriental languages and literature, and his loss is incalculable. With the *Northern Antiquities* you will receive the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, which will probably interest you. The history is written by Southey, one of our most celebrated authors, both in prose and poetry, and lately named Poet Laureate by the Regent. It contains a memoir of poor Leyden's life, which I drew up for the Register, and some other literary articles which will perhaps amuse you.

Mr. Ellis (a man of fortune, and long a member of Parliament) is a particular friend of mine. He has published nothing save his abridgment of the romances, with which you are acquainted. He was a great patron of Mr. Owen, and very earnest for the publication of the *Mabinogion*, of which I have seen some curious specimens in his possession. But unfortunately Owen has gone half mad after a scoundrelly prophet called Brothers, and I fear is too far gone in fanaticism ever to be of

service to literature, which is much to be regretted. Ritson died in a melancholy manner, having first, in a fit of insanity, destroyed all his curious transcripts and manuscripts. Previously, he disposed of his collection of books, which were very curious. I should also explain that Robt. Jamieson, editor of the Ballads, though alike in name and pursuits, is different from Dr. Robt. Jamieson, author of the Scottish Dictionary. The latter is a clergyman, not of the Established Church, but of a particular class of Scottish Dissenters hitherto only remarkable for religious zeal. But this excellent man, upon a very small income in proportion to his exertions, has bred up a family of fifteen or sixteen children, formed a library and collection of medals, and employs his whole leisure in the study of antiquities, without forfeiting the attachment of his hearers or neglecting his professional studies. There are two poems in ancient Scottish, both classical, and almost epic. One relates to the exploits of Robert the Bruce, who recovered Scotland from the English yoke, and is well-nigh historical in its details. The other relates to the great champion of our freedom, William Wallace. It is legendary, but makes up in a high spirit of poetry what it wants in historical authenticity. Both [of] them being till of late great favourites with the common people have been repeatedly reprinted, but in a very degraded and corrupt state. The historian, Mr. Pinkerton, has indeed made an edition of the Bruce, but it is by no means a good one. I have been instigating Dr. Jamieson, who has collated and corrected his copies of both books from the best and most ancient manuscripts, to give us such an edition as Macpherson's edition of Winton's Chronicle, and I am sure he would obtain a splendid subscription. He has written a curious and learned but somewhat heavy work upon the *Culdees*, or Ancient Christian Clergy of Scotland. It is somewhat too professional, but I will add a copy to my parcel for you. I will also join copies of my own things if not out

of print. I am pretty sure I have *Sir Tristram*, on which I put out my strength as an antiquary. But I am at present writing in my little country cottage, and shall not be in Edinburgh till a fortnight hence, and then I shall hardly know how to send my packet. I will make inquiry, however, both at Leith and London, and I only hope it will reach you sooner than your letter of the 24th January has gained Scotland. My friends and publishers, the Messrs. Ballantyne, of Edinburgh, if you should find the Edin. Annual Register likely to find sale in Germany, which, from the historical information, I should think probable, will supply you or your correspondents in exchange for foreign books of reputation. Most of the other volumes of which I shall request your acceptance, are also published by them. What I trust to be able to send you are, The Register, 8 volumes—the Culdees—my own Poems, and *Sir Tristram*. Besides the poems of Marmion and Lady of the Lake, I wrote the Lay of the Last Minstrel and one of Don Roderick, and more lately, Rokeby (these I will send with the Northern Antiquities, and perhaps some other things which do not occur to me at this moment). I presume mails will be now regularly made up through Holland until Hamburg fall. If you address me under care to Francis Freeling, Esq., General Post Office, London, a letter of any moderate size, containing a small volume, if you will, will reach me free of expense. The inner direction, Walter Scott, Esq., Edinburgh. Mr. Freeling is secretary to our post-office establishment through Britain, and a man of literature.

I am possessor of a copy of your *Einsiedler*, and was much flattered by finding the Scottish Ballads had been of use to your researches.

I fear Mr. Douce will do no more for literature. His health is not good, and he has resigned a situation which he had in the Museum, which seems to intimate an intention not to write again. He is by far our most

diligent investigator of the history of popular fiction, but perhaps the habits of collecting minute information are rather inconsistent with the power of generalizing and combining the deductions which it affords. I have not seen the Berlin collection of *Kindermärchen*, 1813, which I should like much to possess, but I have often read with delight the *Volksmärchen* of Musäus,¹ and I recognise in the story of the Berg-Geist at Rammelsberg, and several other tales, the outlines of the stories of our nurseries and schools. I have also a very curious and miscellaneous collection of books in German, containing the *Gehornte Siegfried*, and other romantic tales. They were collected by Mr. Weber, and amount to four volumes. I do not know any one who knows more of Scottish popular fiction than I do myself, excepting the tales of the Highlands, with which I am less immediately familiar. Any questions you can propose on the subject I will answer with all the fidelity and attention in my power. This is a long letter, but I wish it to be accepted as a proof of my willing acceptance of the offer of yours, and of the esteem with which I am, dear Sir, Your obedt. Servant,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, NEAR MELROSE. 29th April 1814

I read the German language with facility, as you are so good as to use the Latin characters, but I dare not attempt to write it.

[*Macmillan's Magazine*, January 1868]

¹ J. A. Musäus's *Die Deutschen Volksmärchen*, herausg. von Wieland, &c. 6 tom. 12mo. Gotha und Halle, 1789-1805. *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 55.

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

ABBOTSFORD, 30th April 1814

JOY—Joy in London now¹—and in Edinburgh moreover my dear Morrutt for never did you or I see and never shall we see—according to all human prospects—a consummation so truly glorious as now bids fair to conclude this long and eventful war. It is startling to think that but for the preternatural presumption and hardness of heart displayd by the arch enemy of mankind we should have had a hollow and ominous truce with him instead of a glorious and stable peace with the country over which he tyrannized and its lawful ruler. But providence had its own wise purposes to answer and such was the deference of France to the ruling power, so devoutly did they worship the Devil for possession of his burning throne that it may be nothing short of his rejection of every fair and advantageous offer of peace could have driven them to those acts of resistance which remembrance of former convulsions had renderd' so fearful to them. Thank God it is done at last and although I rather grudge him even the mouthful of air which he may draw in the isle of Elba yet I question whether the moral lesson would have been completed either by his perishing in battle or being torn to pieces (which I should greatly have preferd) like the De Witts by an infuriated croud of conscripts and their parents. Good God wt. what strange feelings must that man retire from the most unbounded authority ever vested in the hands of one man to the seclusion of privacy and restraint. We have never heard of one good action which he did at least for which there was not some

¹ From Southey's *Carmen Triumphale* :

Wake, lute and harp ! My soul, take up the strain !
 Glory to God ! Deliverance for Mankind !
 Joy . . . for all Nations, joy ! But most for thee
 Who hast so nobly fill'd thy part assign'd
 O England !

selfish or political reason ; and the train of slaughter pestilence and famine and fire which his ambition has occasiond would have outweighd five hundred fold the private virtues of a Titus. These are comfortable reflections to carry with one to privacy. If he writes his own history as he proposes we may gain something. But he must send it here to be printed. Nothing less than a neck or nothing London Bookseller like John Dunton of yore will venture to commit to the press his strange details uncastrated. I doubt that he has *stamina* to undertake such a labour and yet in youth as I knew from the brothers of Lauriston¹ who were his school-companions Bonapartes habits were distinctly and strongly literary. Spain the Continental System and the invasion of Russia he may record as his three leading blunders. An awful lesson to Sovereigns that morality is not so indifferent to politics as Machiavelians will assert. *Res nolunt diu male administrari*. Why can we not meet to talk over these matters over a glass of claret and when shall that be ? Not this spring I fear for time wears fast away and I have remaind here naild among my future oaks which I measure daily with a foot rule. Those which were planted two years ago begin to look very gaily and a venerable plantation of six years old looks as *bobbish* as yours at the dairy by Greta side. Besides I am arranging this cottage a little more conveniently to put off the plague and expence of building another and I assure you I expect to spare Mrs. Morritt and you a chamber in the wall with a dressing room and everything handsome

¹ Jacques Alexandre Bernard, Marquis de Lauriston, and Charles Louis Lauriston, sons of John Law and Jeanne Cavalho. Charles Louis was one of the early *émigrés* and a frequent guest of the poet's father. The earliest letter in the Walpole Collection is from Lewis G. Law, written partly in French, partly in English, from "Cove of Cork, Ship Peggy, 25 Jan. 1796." He is on his way to America in convoy but delayed by winds, so that he has unnecessarily deprived himself of the pleasure "de passer encore le Christmass eve avec votre père et vos amis." The other brother may be Francis John William Law. See John A. Farmer, *Lauriston Castle*, Edinburgh, 1925.

about you. You will not stipulate of course for many square feet.

You would be surprized to hear how the continent is awakening from its iron sleep. The utmost eagerness seems to prevail about English literature. I have had several voluntary epistles from different parts of Germany from men of letters who are eager to know what we have been doing while they were compell'd to play at blind man's buff with the *Ci Devant Empereur*. The feeling of the French officers of whom we have many in our vicinity is very curious and yet natural.¹ Many of them companions of Bonapartes victories and who hitherto have march'd with him from conquest to conquest disbelieve the change entirely. This is all very stupid to send to you who are in the centre of these wonders but what else can I say unless send you the measure of the future fathers of the forest. Mrs. Scott is with me here—the childer' in Edinr. Our kindest love attends Mrs. Morritt. I hope to hear soon her health continues to gain ground.

I have a letter from Southey² in high spirits on the glorious news. What a pity this last battle³ was fought. But I am glad the rascals were beaten once more. Ever yours

WALTER SCOTT

[*Law*]

¹ "A good many French officers, prisoners of war, had been living on *parole* in Melrose, and the adjoining villages; and Mr and Mrs Scott had been particularly kind and hospitable to them."—LOCKHART.

² Dated Keswick, 27th April 1814: "Thank God we have seen the end of this long tragedy of twenty-five years! The curtain is fallen, and though there is the after-piece of the Devil-to-Pay to be performed we have nothing to do with it: it concerns the performers alone. I wish we had been within reach of a meeting upon the occasion, and yet the first feeling was not a joyous one. Too many recollections crowded upon the mind. . . . I desired Longman to send you the *Carmen Triumphale*." The treaty of peace was signed on 30th April.

³ The battle of Toulouse.

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

ABBOTSFORD 1st May 1814

MY DEAR HARTSTONGE,—I presume you had my last letter, and that every thing with respect to your kind assistance in Cash Matters, has been completely settled— Since writing you I have received Mr. Shiels's play,¹ which I think breathes a very high spirit of Poetry—much of the language is exquisitely beautiful—and the figures so far as I can remember equally new and appropriate—I should only object that in some cases the language of Passion is driven to the verge of Bombast— This often happens in nature, but then the storm of actual and existing feeling will carry through expressions which appear ludicrous, when the Passion is avowedly fictitious— Much will no doubt depend on the Actor, and I have no doubt that the Graceful declamation of Powell or Betterton vindicated even the rants of Lee. But when the Actor is but of Mortal Mould, we are rather startled at such expressions as, “ Hell would be Heaven if I beheld him damned ! ! ”— I should also fear that in acting the distress comes on rather too soon—and the violence of agony continues too long to maintain the full interest of which an Author is ambitious— But upon the whole the Drama is eminently beautiful, and I am curious to know who Mr. Shiels is, who has achieved such a daring and difficult [task] as a regular Blank Verse Tragedy, without either show, or Scenery or drums and Trumpets, or blazing Castles— And so we have lost our Friend Boney at last, and he is to go to Elba to record his own deeds— O if he writes with candour what a chapter in the history of the human heart will we read—and at any rate what materials will his narrative furnish for the history of the last 20 years— The last of our Scottish Douglasses said

¹ Richard Lalor Sheil (1791-1851). His *Adelaide, or the Emigrants*, written in 1813, was played by Miss O'Neil at Crow Street Theatre on 19th February 1814.

when he fell into the hands of the Sovereign against whom he had rebelled, and was condemned to the seclusion of Lindores¹ Abbey—"He that can be no better must be a Monk—" and the retirement of Napoleon seems almost monastic— It will be some time before we can have what will be very curious—a genuine account of his doings and sayings, at and after his abdication— The Newspapers will miss him, as the Clergy would miss the Devil, were it possible to annihilate [the] arch-enemy of Mankind— There was a Madman at Barnard Castle, who in his crazy imagination had almost accomplished this last feat—but before absolutely destroying Satan he thought it fair to apprize by a formal letter the Archbishop of Canterbury, that he might seek out some other means of maintaining his Family, arguing not unjustly, "No Devil no Parson"—

EDINBURGH 17th June

The above is from Abbotsford, since that time I have had the pleasure of receiving Marion of Drymnagh²—I am the worst person in the world to apply to for criticism, being always—in poetry as well as in visible nature,—contented if I can *enjoy* the things that others *understand*— But I think the Poem is very pretty and that you lose no ground in it with the Public. Perhaps the story is a little simple, and you have not always been sufficiently careful in your rhimes, which this critical generation looks after with greater accuracy than our Forefather's— Whether we are not a little satiated (speaking of the Public) with Minstrelsy and whether a new species of composition, is not likely to make a stronger impression upon Public curiosity, is a question which cannot affect

¹ A village two miles S.E. of Newburgh in Fife.

² *Marion of Drymnagh : a Tale of Erin, in two Cantos.* By M. W. Hartstonge, Esq., 8vo, 1814. Scott recalls Wordsworth's *A Poet's Epitaph* :

But he is weak ; both Man and Boy
Hath been an idler in the land ;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things that others *understand*.

the merit of your work, though if my opinion be correct, it may be unfavourable to it's extensive popularity—The above is my real opinion, which I have not studied to colour too highly as I trust to your Friendship to excuse the plain dealing of mine. If I were to judge from my own partiality I should have much more to say—I liked Patronage¹ excessively, and owe Miss Edgeworth my grateful acknowledgments, for the pleasure it has given me. The character is admirably drawn, admirably indeed ; it will perhaps on the whole be less poignant, than some of her other works, because there is rather too great a diversion of interest, and because it contains the germ of four distinct stories, whereas the impatience of popular readers can only bear to attend to one single narrative—but in other respects I think it fully equals, and even in some degree excells it's admirable Predecessors— Indeed this Lady is one of the wonders of our age, and I would go an hundred miles to see her—I would also go a long pilgrimage to see Dr. Hill, who was so very kind to me when I was a “ little prating Boy.”— Few things I remember in early life with so much pleasure as his kindness—and I am delighted to hear that he is well and happily settled— I am very sorry for Mr. Shiels's bad health, and very sensible of his kindness. Constable will not now publish Swift untill November, though it is quite ready ; but I should wish to return to you the various Papers, Books &c with the use of which I have been so kindly favoured— What will be the best way ?— Mrs. Scott sends best compts in which the *Children* join—I have scarce room to say I am as always much your's

W. S.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—I have been very ungraciously silent but not forgetful. I delivered all your

¹ Begun in 1787 but not published till 1814.

commissions to Ro: Miller and upbraided him with his delinquencies in the presence of two or three dashing young ladies which being equivalent to a sort of airing in the pillory will I hope make him attentive in future. He promised to despatch all your commissions *sans faute* and I hope you have long ago received fulfillment of his engagements with me. He is a very good soul but tant que soit peu *lazy* like all Edinr. booksellers. The spill came safe and with it the elegant and kind lines which I am sure are sufficient to avert every bad influence from its present honourd proprietor.

I am at present fitting up our little cottage at Abbotsford so as to make it (though the least of all possible cottages) comfortable for a few years for our out of doors offices etc. being tolerably complete we want but little room in our corps de logis. Among other improvements, the drawing room being just twelve foot by twelve, I have enlarged it by opening a recess for books and arms and there I shall have my old great grandfathers cabinet fitted up for holding all my curiosities among which the spell shall hold a distinguished place.

As for public news I begin to think of the last 20 years like honest John Bunyan "I awoke and behold it was a dream" and were it not for certain feelings that hint to me I am not at present in my twentieth year I think there would be little in public matters which would persuade me that I had outlived the Republic one and indivisible and the no less formidable Imperial dynasty of France and have seen that most extraordinary people precisely set down where they were taken up after such seas of blood and mines of treasure as have been expended on these gigantic plans of ambition. To our national character the struggle has been highly useful for independent of the pitch of national grandeur to which Britain is now elevated I believe our true insular character has been restored to the young men of consequence in this generation by their being excluded from the frippery

of foreign manners which every man of fashion used to pick up at the Parisian court. Besides at the beginning of the war we had sunk too much into a commercial people and now at its conclusion I don't think our taxes and levies have done us a greater hardship than Captain Barclay would recommend for training a bruiser—just enough in short to get rid of all our superfluous corpulence and bring us to the capacity of exerting our full moral and physical fever.

Morritt has been at Paris and writes me a most curious account of that capital.¹ He swears that from all he has learned he is convinced that Bonaparte's mission was an avatar or bodily descent of the devil such earnestness did he show to demoralise the French nation and destroy everything like public and private virtue. The Parisians were dreadfully mortified but so annoyed with the fears and trivets as Mrs. Quickly says which they had passed through that they had become quite passive. No enthusiasm was manifested unless among the old nobility—in short had it not been such pretty pleaders as Blücher, Platon and so forth the Bourbons would never have gained their cause from the sense of its justice—Have you not got a spare isle for poor Boney who is bounced from one island to another and refused every where like a bad shilling. I wish they could put him on board of the phantom ship called the Flying Dutchman which haunts the Southern latitudes.

It would be a very appropriate punishment to unbounded ambition to condemn [him] to such [a flight] through length of Ages [towards] a port which should always [be] flying before him.

¹ In a letter of 13th May: "Except at Notre Dame where the gentry and ancient noblesse attended in great numbers I saw no enthusiasm whatever. They are a degraded people their army regretting the loss of Bonaparte because they were inured by him to crime and plunder and indulged in swinish and sordid profligacy. Their labouring classes employed by him and caressed regret the discontinuance of the extortion that embellished Paris with the spoils and misery of the world. . . . Every human being speaks of Wellington as the hero of the war." Morritt was a thorough John Bull.

I think the worthy Gael who mistook a toothpick case for a snuff box had no mind that you should acquire the mountain taste for the Indian weed upon a very formidable scale—for me I hate to see either man or woman under fifty touch snuff— I hope it will fall into as great discredit as smoking which after all is the [more] seducing Vice of the two—so that with my goodwill there should not be a snuffbox larger than your anomalous acquisition in all Scotland.

Sophia comes on pretty well at her singing—She is really a comfortable child and grows companionable to me as she extends the limits of her information. My wife sends her best love to Mrs. Clephane and Miss Anna Jane in which I sincerely join and I beg also to be remembered to my younger acquaintance who must now be far advanced. What chance is there of seeing you this winter in Edinburgh—methinks the lonely isle might be left to itself during the dead season of frost and snow. Believe me my dear Miss Clephane. Most truly yours.

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 20 *May* 1814.

[*Northampton*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR SIR,—I may in return accuse you of being a bad correspondent for since I wrote you a long letter from Abbotsford you have only expressed yourself like the professions in Jupiter by symbols instead of words or characters. For instance I received about a week since a beautiful packet of acorns which I interpreted to mean all sorts of good wishes for the weal & prosperity of my household and future groves. I have left a long letter at Abbotsford half finished so this shall be a short one as I hope to get there at the time of the Birthday. Things are in great confusion about me there. Your little Bed Room is to be thrown into the parlour and dignified with the

title of drawing room moreover there is to be an eating closet in the other end of the house whileome the Laundry, and a new Laundry out of doors with a snug room & dressing room for a friend : all this perhaps I have told you already having been uppermost in my head for some time—I enclose you two songs which were sung yesterday at the Pitt Club of Scotland where mustered I should think above 500 strong of the first rank. The serious song did not tell very well as indeed both its length and the slowness of the tune were an objection, it was however well enough received. The other had an excellent effect. There was an excellent song sung by James Boswell of Auchinleck,¹ son of Johnsons Bozzy, of which I wish I could get you a copy though the merit of these things relies upon the skill of the singer in some degree and the favourable prejudices of a numerous and elated audience in a still greater. Among all these matters you say, where is Swift ? Why out of my hands thank God.— But not yet before the public owing to delay of Engravers paper makers and God knows what besides but I hope it will be out almost instantly & I think your copy with one for Mr. Berwick and one for Mr. Theophilus Swift will reach Ireland among the very first. I told you that by some inexplicable oversight Constable neglected to have any extra copies of the Life thrown off and I foolishly trusting to him did not enquire what was done in the matter until it was too late to correct the error. There has been a foolishly conducted publication by Longman and Co. called Border Antiquities. I go to Abbotsford tomorrow for a week where I expect to be up to the ears in business & mortar. Charlotte and the young folks send kind remembrance. Yours very sincerely WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 3d June [1814]

I shall send this under Mr. Taylors cover—they have published the songs together—I send two copies. This

¹ See letter to him of 25th April 1818.

letter has been long in despatching for a fair Lady bore away the copies I meant to have sent you. I have marked my own two ditties & am in no way responsible for any of the others.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

EDINBURGH, 17th June 1814

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,—I suspended writing to thank you for the *Carmen Triumphale*—(a happy omen of what you can do to immortalize our public story)—until the feverish mood of expectation and anxiety should be over. And then, as you truly say, there followed a stunning sort of listless astonishment and complication of feeling, which, if it did not lessen enjoyment, confused and confounded one's sense of it. I remember the first time I happened to see a launch, I was neither so much struck with the descent of the vessel, nor with its majestic sweep to its moorings, as with the blank which was suddenly made from the withdrawing so large an object, and the prospect which was at once opened to the opposite side of the dock crowded with spectators. Buonaparte's fall strikes me something in the same way : the huge bulk of his power, against which a thousand arms were hammering, was obviously to sink when its main props were struck away—and yet now—when it has disappeared—the vacancy which it leaves in our minds and attention, marks its huge and preponderating importance more strongly than even its presence. Yet I so devoutly expected the termination, that in discussing the matter with Major Philips, who seemed to partake of the doubts which prevailed during the feverish period preceding the capture of Paris, when he was expressing his apprehensions that the capital of France would be defended to the last, I hazarded a prophecy that a battle would be fought on the heights of Mont Martre—(no great sagacity, since it was the point where Marlborough proposed to attack, and

for which Saxe projected a scheme of defence)—and that if the allies were successful, which I little doubted, the city would surrender, and the Senate proclaim the dethronment of Buonaparte. But I never thought nor imagined that he would have *given in* as he has done. I always considered him as possessing the genius and talents of an Eastern conqueror ; and although I never supposed that he possessed, allowing for some difference of education, the liberality of conduct and political views which were sometimes exhibited by old Hyder Ally, yet I did think he might have shown the same resolved and dogged spirit of resolution which induced Tippoo Saib to die manfully upon the breach of his capital city with his sabre clenched in his hand. But this is a poor devil, and cannot play the tyrant so rarely as Bottom the Weaver proposed to do. I think it is Strap in Roderick Random, who seeing a highwayman that had lately robbed him, disarmed and bound, fairly offers to box him for a shilling. One has really the same feeling with respect to Buonaparte, though if he go out of life after all in the usual manner, it will be the strongest proof of his own insignificance, and the liberality of the age we live in. Were I a son of Palm or Hoffer, I should be tempted to take a long shot at him in his retreat to Elba. As for coaxing the French by restoring all our conquests, it would be driving generosity into extravagance : most of them have been colonized with British subjects, and improved by British capital ; and surely we owe no more to the French nation than any well-meaning individual might owe to a madman, whom—at the expense of a hard struggle, black eyes, and bruises—he has at length overpowered, knocked down, and by the wholesome discipline of a bull's pizzle and strait-jacket, brought to the handsome enjoyment of his senses. I think with you, what we return to them should be well paid for ; and they should have no Pondicherry to be a nest of smugglers, nor Mauritius to nurse a hornet-swarm of privateers. In

short, draw teeth, and pare claws, and leave them to fatten themselves in peace and quiet, when they are deprived of the means of indulging their restless spirit of enterprise.

— The above was written at Abbotsford last month, but left in my portfolio there till my return some days ago ; and now, when I look over what I have written, I am confirmed in my opinion that we have given the rascals too good an opportunity to boast that they have got well off. An intimate friend of mine, just returned from a long captivity in France, witnessed the entry of the King, guarded by the Imperial Guards, whose countenances betokened the most sullen and ferocious discontent. The mob, and especially the women, pelted them for refusing to cry “Vive le Roi.” If Louis is well advised, he will get rid of these fellows gradually, but as soon as possible. “Joy, joy in London now !” What a scene has been going on there ! I think you may see the Czar appear on the top of one of your stages one morning. He is a fine fellow, and has fought the good fight. Yours affectionately,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

MY DEAR SIR,—All your valuable tokens of Friendship and kindness have arrived safe, but the Claymore &c are still in the Custom house ; John Ballantyne goes down to Leith today, to relieve them from their ignoble bondage—The Amphi Theatre is a most curious monument of extreme antiquity ; it puts me in mind in point of size and appearance of a large oval enclosure called Mayburgh, situated on the river Emont near it's issuing from the Lake of Ulswater, and about four miles above Penrith. It is a grand circuit, and fit to contain a whole synod of Druids, for whose use it was most probably intended. But as the walls are merely mounds of stone, the construction of the Irish Amphi Theatre is infinitely more curious. Indeed in this particular it greatly resembles

what are called in the Highlands *Duns* ; These very ancient Dwellings must have been constructed by a People unacquainted with cement—or with the properties of the *Arch*—but who endeavoured to secure a covering more or less perfect for their erection by arranging the stones with the rows projecting inwards, more and more as they arose in height above each other, while their stability was secured by an attention to the counterpoise created by their weight. Morritt tells me that several of the most ancient monuments in Greece, particularly one which appears to be that called by Pausanias the tomb of the Sons of Atreus near Argos, is completely roof'd in upon this principle, and some have thought that the Pyramids of Egypt have been built by a People who did not understand raising an Arch—though one would think that the neighbouring Caverns of the Troglodytes afforded them a good Pattern— These Duns however have been certainly thus built, and greatly resemble an old Fashioned Pigeon house— The Chambers in such rude lodging are gained out of the thickness of the rampart—exactly as in the Drawing of the Irish Amphi Theatre—And although the Duns are much smaller, and obviously intended for private, as the latter was destined for public use, yet I can hardly doubt they have been the work of the same people, & the same period— The 3d Vol. of Gulliver which is contrived very nearly to imitate the external appearance as well as the style of the original is a very curious bookselling trick—it is chiefly a translation, or rather abridgement of a French Philosophical romance, entitled *Histoire des Severambes*¹ which was written, if I forget not, by a Monsr. Nellety or some such name, and excited a good deal of speculation, as well as animadversion, on account of it's containing some sceptical opinions— The Peacocks Crown I have read of, it is most beautifully emblazoned—

¹ See Life of Swift, *Prose Works*, vol. ii. pp. 304-5, and *Abbotsford Library Catalogue*, p. 45. Evidently "Nellety" should be "Alletz."

18th June [1814].

. . . But I would rather talk or write of any thing else, than politics, besides I have not yet had the grace to thank you for the noble claymore and all the stock of erudition which accompanied it— The Anthologia with a considerable quantity of base metal seems to contain much that is truly valuable and curious— And Croker's Theatrical Poem is very pleasant indeed— We have had here my friend Sarah Smith from the Dublin Theatre, whom you have sent back to us very much improved ; she is a powerful and striking actress, and a very good Girl in private life—and talks of Ireland as if her heart were still there— I am getting on with Swift and fairly spy land—the last Vol: is in progress, and then I have only the Life to send to press—with such addenda as Mr. Steeles box may afford— As an American poem especially by a Judge is rather a curiosity, I send you the enclosed transatlantic flight upon Pegasus—It does not appear that the Blue Mountains are so favourable to his pasture as Parnassus, if we are to judge from the late grand importation of Ld. Byron, which contains some passages of most magnificent poetry— As for Judge Brackenridge his poetry is not better than his subject. I have been delighted by the new Vol. of Miss Edgeworths Fashionable Tales especially by that of the absentee. Oh what a world your island will be when Fashion and Prejudice shall have ceased to sow division among you and when the independence and wealth of your farmers shall render the presence or absence of your Landlords a matter of little consequence to any but themselves. In Scotland for this half century past the most severe and even profligate landlords have not been able to prevent their tenantry from flourishing. Nay upon the estate of the late Duke of Queensberry one of the most selfish men in the world and one of those most anxious to realize an immense immediate income at the expense of his heirs the tenants flourished like green bay trees— But I have already

greatly exceeded the bounds of a letter especially as I am packing up all my Museum to send it to Abbotsford and am writing in the midst of boxes filled with broadswords, targets, pistols, lances, & daggers. Yours very truly

W SCOTT

EDINGH. 30th June [1814]

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY

MY DEAR SIR,—I am truly grateful to you for giving me an opportunity of putting myself in your recollection and brightening the chain of friendship.¹ I send a drawing made by a young lady resident in my family, not of my present residence, Abbotsford, but of Ashestiel, where we lived eight very happy years. Abbotsford has hitherto been so bare and in such confusion that it was not possible to give an idea of it. This season we are better settled, and I propose to send you a drawing as a companion to the enclosed, though I shall be obliged to beg the fair artist to exaggerate somewhat the trees, which are yet but bushes, and to show it rather as it will be three years hence than as it is at present. But this is a sort of second sight that is, I hope, permissible to the painter as well as to the poet. I have had a letter lying by me, I don't know how long, from Sophia, thanking you for your kind verses, by which she is much honoured. But as children's epistles are no gospels, it skills not much when they are delivered. She has added a trumpery shell-purse, being the only thing she can think of within the compass of her skill that she can offer to Mr. Hayley, as she had taken a good deal of trouble to clean and arrange the scallop shells, I did not care to dishearten her, though, to be sure, such a piece of trumpery was never sent four or five hundred miles before. However, if not rare, it is far-fetched, and that sometimes does as well.

¹ See vol. ii. p. 513 and note.

Adieu, my venerable and kind father in the muses. I shall be delighted to hear of your good health when you can favour me with a line. I intended to have been with the grand advance upon Paris this year, but things came in the way, which I regret excessively, for such a scene the eyes of men will never again open upon. Yours ever most affectionately,

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN., 20th June 1814.

[*Hawick Arch. Socy.*]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I owe you many apologies for not sooner answering your very entertaining letter upon your Parisian journey. I heartily wish I had been of your party for you have seen what I trust will not be seen again in a hurry since to enjoy the delight of a restoration there is a necessity for a previous bouleversement of every thing that is valuable in morals and policy which seems to have been the case in France since 1790. The Duke of Buccleuch told me yesterday of a very good reply of Louis to some of his attendants who proposed shutting the doors of his apartments to keep out the throng of people. Open the door he said to John Bull he has suffered a great deal in keeping the door open for me.

And to go from one important subject to another I must account for my own laziness which I do by referring you to a small anonymous sort of a novel in 3 volumes¹ which you will receive by the Mail of this

¹ *Waverley* is inserted by Morritt in the original and by Lockhart in his version. *Waverley* was begun, Scott tells us in the later introduction to the novels, about 1805 (i.e. probably 1806), for in that year Surtees was urging him to write a poem on the '15 or the '45. See vol. i. p. 341, note. In 1810, after the setting up of John Ballantyne & Co., the work was included in their printed list of "New Works and Publications for 1809-10 : *Waverley* ; or 'tis Sixty Years Since ; a novel in three vols. 12mo." In

day. It was a very old attempt of mine to embody some traits of those characters and manners peculiar to Scotland the last remnants of which vanished during my own youth so that few or no traces now remain. I had written great part of the first volume and sketched other passages when I mislaid the manuscript and only found it by the merest accident as I was rummaging the drawers of an old cabinet and I took the fancy of finishing it which I did so fast that the last two volumes were written in three weeks. I had a great deal of fun in the accomplishment of this task though I do not expect that it will be popular in the South as much of the humour if there is any is local and some of it even professional. You however who are an adopted Scotchman will find some amusement in it. It has made a very strong impression here and the good people of Edinburgh are busied in tracing the author and in finding out originals for the portraits it contains. In the first case they will probably find it difficult to convict the guilty author although he is far from escaping suspicion for Jeffrey has offered to make oath that it is mine and another great critic has tendered his affidavit *ex contrario* so that these authorities have divided the Good Town—however the thing has succeeded very well and is thought highly of—I don't know if it has got to London yet. I intend to maintain my incognito. Let me know your opinion about it. I should be most happy if I could think it would amuse a painful thought at this anxious moment. I was in hopes Mrs. Morritt was getting so much better that this relapse afflicts me very much. I trust a mild climate and Southern skies will do much for

September the early chapters were sent to James Ballantyne, and he comments on it in a letter of the 15th, guardedly, but urging that it should be continued. The letter is printed by Lockhart. Later James seems to have thought the chapters dealing with Waverley's visit to Tullyveolan were "vulgar," but why exactly it was laid aside again is impossible to say in the absence of more letters of the Ballantynes and the loss of the correspondence with Erskine.

her. This last season has been uncommonly & universally severe upon invalids, but is now amending. Pray remember us kindly to Mrs. Morritt. I think next season Abbotsford will look better than it has hitherto done and that you and Mrs. M. will find no impediment from health or otherwise from taking another look at the borders. How glad I should be if we could look forward to this with any kind of certainty. We would meet you wherever you should find it most convenient and I trust I could shew you some parts of Scotland which you have not yet seen.

I say my gratulor on your becoming once more a member of the legislature. I promise you I think Lord Harewood has shewn his regard for his country fully as much as his private friendship in contributing to place you there and I heartily hope you will take all your old English spirit with you and give the house a little infusion of it now and then.¹ The opposition might be the better of it and the ministerial folks not the worse for the support of good sense and talents becomes doubly powerful when the owner is independant and cannot even be suspected of party views. Your friend Mr. Wharton was and I believe still may be in Scotland. I misssd dining with him at the Solicitors² or somewhere. He is a great ornithologist and is particularly anxious to see an earn² but he must go farther north before he can be gratified.

Pray remember [me] kindly to Lady Louisa. I saw her friends at Dalkeith—the Duchess looks thin and poorly but she is just going to be confined and I hope that the happy termination of that matter will turn her thoughts from her late domestic distress.

¹ “ You will see by the back of my letter that I am once more a member of the legislature. Lord Harewood in the kindest & most liberal manner offered me the seat at Northallerton which became vacant by the death of his son Lord Lascelles & I was elected & returned without leaving my abode here &c.”—MORRITT.

² i.e. Solicitor-General's. An “ earn ” is an eagle.

This is a miserable business of Lord Cochrane.¹ He was always a hawk of an ill nest for his father was addicted to the swindle, but I wish they had spared the pillory for the sake of his name & I fear his representatives will send him back to parl't. again like the bad shilling.

Talking of politics have you seen the Political Memento a collection from the speeches of Members on both sides on the conduct and probable issue of the war for the three years last past.

In order that each troop might be preceded by its trumpeter in proper form a quotation from Childe Harold is placed on the title page in contradistinction with one from Don Roderick. They refer to a little spirit of prophecy in which I think however I may fail in poetical merit. I have certainly the same advantage claim'd in the memorable case of two men who had as Joe Miller assures us a wager depending upon their poetical readiness. The first set off with

I John Lyster
Lay with your sister.

“That's not true” quoth his opponent. “No” said Mr. Lyster “but its good rhyme.” On which the other retorted

I George Greene
Lay with your wife

“Thats not rhyme” said Mr. Lyster. “Aye but its *true*” quoth George. With which triumph of veracity over poetical fancy I will close a letter which would be too long unless to a Member. Ever yours most truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 9th July [PM. 1814]

¹ Thomas Cochrane, later tenth Earl of Dundonald (1775-1860), whose reforming politics and criticism of the Admiralty had made him obnoxious to the Government, was accused in 1814 of connivance in a stock-exchange fraud and expelled from the navy, parliament and the Order of the Bath. He was at once re-elected for Westminster, but harassed by fines and imprisonment. In 1817 he accepted the command of the Chilean navy, and was an active agent in securing the independence of Chili and of Brazil.

On Monday we go to Abbotsford—pray address there by Melrose—The children are all there already & all well “rinning about my grieve assures me like mad nolt.”¹

[*Law*]

TO JOHN SWINTON²

MY DEAR JOHN,—I return you safe the Tree of the Swintons of which as an unworthy sprout I have made a copy to my exceeding refreshment as Robinson Crusoe says after his glass of rum. I have some thoughts of completing a sort of Border sketch of the Battle of Otterbourne in which God willing our old carle shall have his due. There are few circumstances that interest me more than looking back on old times and thro your family the perspective is uncommonly long. I have often meditated a descent upon your castle of Broadmeadows but I have at present a voyage upon hand to the Hebrides and the Ultima Thule, if the Orkneys and Shetlands are rightly so called which I leave to the learned. If after August be well spent you should think of a journey up Tweed you will find the smallest of small cottages at Abbotsford has a room for Mrs. Swinton & you. Adieu my dear John. Believe me always Yours most truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 10 *July* 1814

[*Davidson*]

¹ *i.e.* cattle.

² In order to help the English John Swinton (see note at p. 414, 26th February 1814) Scott had written to his cousin of the same name at Meadows House, Berwick, who replied on 14th April: “I send you by General Dundas the genealogical tree of our Family in order that you may have a copy taken for yourself. My Sisters have made a Copy which I shall send to our Friend John of Northwich with whom I have opened an entertaining correspondence &c.”

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE FAVOURED BY MR. WILKIE

Sunday Night [10th July 1814]

MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I set off to-morrow for Abbotsford. I give you joy of the 2000,¹ which I learn from John. I send to your care, or rather to that of Mr. Cadell, whom I take (in such petty matters) to be the more trustworthy person a wooden packing box containing some valuable books and papers sent me from Ireland. I have addressed them *per aversionem* to Mr. Harts-tongue. Pray, see they move with your Irish copies of Swift.

I have almost settled to take the tour of Scotland and the isles in the sloop belonging to the Northern Light Commissioners. You shall hear of the result. Will you have the goodness to let me know when you will forward the P. Regents Swift and address me at Abbotsford by Melrose. If my journey holds I will see you as I return to Edinburgh in about a fortnight. Our measures must be kept silent.¹

The bearer is a very gentle and quiet young man who has raised himself by his talents. He is studying medicine. If he looks into your shop, I will thank you to show him some gentle countenance.—Yours truly,

W. SCOTT

[Rosebery and Kilpatrick]

¹ "The 2000" [*i.e.* copies sold] and the "Our measures must be kept silent," refer to *Waverley*, as Constable's endorsement shows. The success of *Waverley* was much needed by Constable, who in May is still complaining to Cadell of Scott's failure to have Swift ready "immediately after the Lady of the Lake," when the booksellers would take anything bearing his name. "Don Roderick helped to damn him—& the failure of *Rokeby* completed it. In the meantime Lord Byron carries the laurel & we are left in a considerable scrape . . . never mind we shall make it all up I trust by & bye whether by W. S. is a different question & yet a new Poem equal to the Lady of the Lake would do both him & us much good."

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO

EDINBURGH, 10 *July* 1814

MY DEAR SIR,—I wrote you in winter upon the subject of your curious and valuable MS. which I think fully equal to any which you have yet written ; as that letter did not reach you, I will mention its principal points, in the parcel consisting of the MS. itself, which I will return to-morrow. Your poem, with some material papers of my own, has been for some months in a situation rather secure than accessible ; for, in the hurry attending my removal from one house in the country to another, my furniture was deposited in a hay-loft ; and at the bottom of a heap of old arms, helmets, and broadswords, fenced in with a cheveux-de-frise of chairs, tables, and bed-posts, stood a small bureau, containing all my own papers and your beautiful poem. I could not trust the key of this treasure-chest to any one but myself, and I only got my matters a little arranged last week, when I recovered your verses, and brought them to town with me.

I wish you joy of the marvellous conclusion of the strange and terrible drama which our eyes have seen opened, and I trust finally closed, upon the grand stage of Europe. I used to be fond of war when I was a younger man, and longed heartily to be a soldier ; but now I think there is no prayer in the service with which I could close more earnestly, than “ Send peace in our time, good Lord.”

I send this under Mr. Davies Giddy’s¹ cover, and conclude hastily that I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott, 1832*]

¹ See note, vol. ii. p. 8.

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE

ABBOTSFORD, 13 July 1814

MY DEAR ERSKINE,—I shall byde tryste. I think if I dine with you in town on the 26th I shall do well enough. I have very little to do in the way of packing. I shall bring a good rifle and a fowling piece for better shots than myself. Macheath shall also be forthcoming. I assure you I promise myself no little fun but especially a good stock of new ideas. I should like to sound you off a Lord of the Isles. As we shall be at Ulva of course, I hope I shall have a day to give to Torloisk where the ladies would hardly forgive one passing by them and I know they will be delighted to see you. I should like also to see Skye and Dunvegan & the Isle of Egg.

Things are looking delightfully here despite of unfavourable weather.

When you have an opportunity will you probe the Advocate's opinion about the Polwarth peerage.¹ Harden is anxious about it and as Lord or no Lord he is a very good fellow you must serve him if you can.

Whatever stores &c are to be laid in pray see my name added to the contributor's list. I am greatly obliged to Hamilton and Duff for adding me so kindly to their party. I hear Bailie MacWheeble² is in high feather in Edinburgh. Yours ever most truly

WALTER SCOTT

Will you let your servant take the order opposite side to my tailor to get me a garment or two against the 28th.

¹ Hugh, third Earl of Marchmont and Baron Polwarth, died in 1794, when the earldom became dormant, but the right to the barony devolved on his grand-daughter, Anne, Baroness Polwarth. She was succeeded by her aunt, Diana, who had in April 1754 married Walter Scott of Harden. Her son, Hugh Scott, whose marriage to the daughter of Count Bruhl was mentioned in earlier letters (see vol. i. p. 42, vol. ii. pp. 348, 430), claimed, and was in 1835 allowed, the barony.

² Baillie Macwheeble (the Baron of Bradwardine's baillie or prime minister) stands here for *Waverley*. Erskine was in the secret of the novels, but alas! Scott's letters to him accompanying them as composed were destroyed by a too conscientious lady on the death of Erskine. Macheath is, I fear, a brand of whiskey.

I hope you made me acceptable to your coadjutors.

“Go tell my good Lord,” said this modest young man

“If he will but *invite me to dinner*

I’ll be as *diverting as ever I can*

I will on the faith of a sinner.”

[*Sir Alfred J. Law*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

ABBOTSFORD 18th July 1814

DEAR HARTSTONGE,—I received your letter only two days since, I am greatly obliged to Mr. Sheill for his flattering attention,¹ and enclose a letter to assure him of my sincere gratitude. I am speedy in writing this boat, because I am like the Man in the Song “just going to sea for a trip”—which I hope will be a very pleasant one— You must know that a committee of the Commissioners for the Northern Lights, are going to make a tour of Scotland and the Isles, with the purpose of visiting the stations of the various Lighthouses, and taking the opportunity of seeing every thing curious, from Fife Ness to Greenock, including Shetland the Orkneys and Hebrides— We have a stout Yacht well man’d—and the Admiral has sent a sloop of War to sweep any Americans out of our way. I expect a great deal of amusement, as our time and vessel are entirely under our own command—Meanwhile I have packed a square deal box as well and neatly as I could with the various treasures I received from you for assistance with Swift—Constable has again changed his mind and publishes instantly,² so you will

¹ Shiel had written on the 2nd July to thank Scott for encouragement ; to send him a copy of his tragedy *Adelaide* ; and, of course, to beg his help with English publishers and reviewers. Hartstonge’s letter of the 7th (which Scott is answering) defends and apologises for some of Shiel’s extravagances :

Hell would be Heav’n if I beheld him damn’d ;

and describes Miss O’Neil as *Adelaide* ; and gives him a short account of Shiel ; and asks has Scott read Lady Morgan’s *O’Donnell* ; and criticises Madame D’Arbray’s [*sic*] last novel.

² Lockhart mistakenly asserts that *Swift* came out on the 1st July. See *Life*, chap. xxvii.

receive your copy very soon—& I trust a good one. I can easily get you half a dozen of the Portrait (so soon as I go to Town, which will be on the 25th or 26th as we sail on the 28th for the *Ultima Thule*— Constable was to send the books addressed to Cumming the Bookseller of your City.

Finding my box too large, I have packed on the top two or three new publications for your acceptance. The first is *Waverley a Novel in 3 Volumes*, of which the good town of Edinr. give me credit as the Author. They do me too much honor, and I heartily wish I had both the credit and profit. But I believe you will like it, though perhaps not so much as I do, who am sensible of the likeness of the old fashioned portraits— The Author must have had your inimitable Miss Edgeworth strongly in his view, for the manner is palpably imitated while the pictures are original. I agree with you that Lady Morgan¹ has fairly hit upon her forte—for O'Donnell is incomparably superior to the *Wild Irish Girl*—having nature and reality for it's foundation. Madame D'Arbley has certainly made a miss, and it is a great pity ; I suspect her having lived little in England for some years has destroyed her feeling of National character, for *Evelina* and *Cecilia* are uncommonly fine compositions.

I do not allow your apology for Mr. Sheill's violent love ; Milton's Satan speaks of Heaven and Hell with propriety, in fact he had nothing else to talk of, but simple Mortals do not bring the supernatural world into the Lists with the same propriety— This must be a short letter, for the Children are setting off for Boswell fair, and I shall send this by them to Borthwickbrae who

¹ Miss Owenson, now Lady Morgan (the wife of Thomas Charles Morgan, surgeon to Lord Abercorn, who had been knighted by the Duke of Richmond in 1812), published her *O'Donnell* ; a *National Tale*, in 1814. Her politics rather than her faults as an artist made her the object of Croker's and Gifford's coarse invective in the *Quarterly*. Madame d'Arbly's novel of 1814 was *The Wanderer ; or French Difficulties*. By the author of *Evelina*, *Cecilia* and *Camilla*. It is savagely reviewed by Gifford in the April *Quarterly*, who is especially angry with the author for her Bonapartist sympathies.

will give me a Frank, for truly it is not worth postage—If there are in the box any fragments of Swiftiana, which ought to have remained with me, you can preserve them for me, and if on the other hand any thing be amissing which should be returned, you will have the kindness to let me know, that I may search for it. I must trust to your kindness to assist the Collection among the various Proprietors—and am always—Most truly Yrs. W SCOTT.

P. S. I forgot to say the box contains the Northern Antiquities, and a piece of tolerable dull Trans-Atlantic Wit, A Parody on the Lay of the Last Minstrel, which however I take to be the highest compliment I ever received, since it blends me with the Naval reputation of my country.—

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO WILLIAM SOTHEBY,¹ AT T. ESTEDS, ESQ., EATON, NEAR
NORTHAMPTON

MY DEAR SIR,—I am just favoured with your letter and

¹ William Sotheby (1757-1833), a dilettante and would-be poet, dramatist and translator. He is chiefly remembered as the Botherby of Byron's *Beppo* :

No bustling *Botherby* have they to show 'em
"That charming passage in the last new poem :"

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
Who having angled all his life for Fame,
And getting but a nibble at a time,
Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same
Small "Triton of the minnows," the sublime
Of Mediocrity, the furious tame,
The Echo's echo, the usher of the school
Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool !

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,
The approving "Good" ! (by no means GOOD in law)
Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,
Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,
Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,
Translating tongues he knows not even by letter,
And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

Scott treated him more kindly.

do not delay a moment to say that so far as I am concerned I will do all in my power to comply with any request of yours and that I have little doubt Mr. Siddons will be easily induced to bring Darnley¹ forward upon our stage. There are however one or two circumstances which I cannot but place under your observation leaving you to consider whether they may not in some respects alter your plan. In the first [place] Siddons's set is positively very bad—not a decent performer among them but his wife and young Murray her brother and Mrs. S. though a very pretty and pleasing actress in parts of comedy or of sentiment has not that depth of tragic power which I am sure would be necessary to give effect to a tragedy of yours. Siddons you have seen so I need say nothing and Murray is quite a lad and very diffident [*sic*] though with good parts. Now you know Shakespeare would not stand bad acting and except those the others are monsters in apparel speech demeanor and every thing else. 2dly. If your play is brought out here with the greatest success it will nevertheless by some senseless etiquette be excluded from the London boards where alone it has a chance of receiving justice. Lastly the Edinr. audience are conceited cross-grained and unreasonably severe seldom including either the best judges or the best company and great lovers of the beautiful amusement of a *row*, so that a new play has little chance of being heard with candour or patience.² I should not mind this risque on your account were I equally sure that Darnley would be [as] well got up and acted as I am confident that its merits deserve. But where an audience is unreasonably severe the blunder

¹ *The Death of Darnley*, an unpublished play.

² The Whig Jeffrey and the Tory Scott seem to have been at one about an Edinburgh audience, for the former wrote to Hazlitt, who had suggested a course of lectures: "I think Edinburgh the worst place in the world for such experiments as you seem to meditate, both from the extreme dissipation of the fashionable part of its population, and from a sort of conceit and fastidiousness in all the middling classes which, originating at least as much in a coldness of nature as in any extraordinary degree of intelligence, makes them very ready to find fault and decry."

of a clumsy player is almost sure to bring down a storm upon the piece and of this I should have great fears—I mention these things for your consideration and have only to add what however does not affect you much that of all the tragedies brought out here within these six years only one has stood. I spoke to Jeffery who always thinks most kindly towards you and he thinks some disadvantage may also arise from the real history of Darnley being matter of such vivid recollection among us here. Having put these considerations under your eye I have only to add that I will speak to Mr. Siddons as you request if you should [not] think those of such weight as to make you hesitate in your purpose.

I am delighted you are turning your talents to the Italian poetry. I believe I am wrong but Ariosto is a greater favourite with me than Tasso. But I would willingly see you at work upon either. Hoole's¹ verses are absolute dish washings—I agree much with you about the Excursion—it is a pity such a fine manly high principled man as Wordsworth will not discard some of his peculiarities and do himself justice. I have just got Roderick. My Lord of the Isles embraces an interesting period in Scottish history—If I fail I fail if not

Up wi' the bonny blue bonnet
The dirk and the feather and a'.

I regret we saw so little of Capt. Sotheby and should be most happy could I promise myself a visit from you. But it is more likely we will meet in town first. Believe me most truly yrs

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN 21st July 1814

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

¹ John Hoole (1727-1803), the translator of Tasso and Ariosto.

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

22d July [1814]¹

DEAR SIR,—I told you, when you made a very fair offer for the Lord of the Isles, that I would think of it and reply when my materials, etc., were somewhat arranged. I have been busy with this matter since I was here, and I really think that, with the advantage of my proposed tour—where we are to visit everything curious from Fife-ness to Greenock, whether on continent or island, I may boldly set considerable value on the fruit of my labours. I mention this because, I assure you frankly, I would not be more grieved at disappointment on my own account than on yours. I therefore propose to close with your terms for half the work, you giving Longman the offer of an equal share with you, for I owe this house too much kindness to leave them out. The price to be 1500 gns. settled by such acceptances as will suit our mutual convenience, which can be arranged on my coming to town. I wish to leave things straight behind me, and sail upon the 27th, unless delayed by the winds. I should therefore wish to see you on Tuesday morning about 11 and for that purpose shall call at the shop. The poem will go to press almost immediatly on my return, and be out, as I conceive, in January at latest.

I mentioned to you the weighty reasons I have for retaining a moiety of this copyright, and I assure you all good jockeys chuse that their rider should have bets depending upon the issue of the race. Upon this moiety I only wish to have half profits accepted for on publication at such a date as will meet your own returns from the booksellers,—you and Longman managing the whole your own way.

In other circumstances I should certainly have stipulated a contingent advantage in case of such success as the L[ady] of the Lake ; but you have been kind and

¹ The exact date of this letter is supplied by Constable on the original.

freindly, and kindness and freindship will, I hope, never be thrown away upon me. I assure you I shall be delighted that you make a right good thing of it. Be pleased to send me a line to Castle Street on Monday, stating whether this sketch of an agreement meets your views. I think it is so like your own that it leaves little to be settled between us. I shall be there by three o'clock, and you can say if it is convenient for you to meet me on Tuesday.

Abbotsford is looking beautiful, but I am still annoyed with workpeople. I trust it will be swept and garnished against my return.—Believe me very truly yours,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—This will be a very short letter being the precursor of an equally short visit to the lonely Isle. This resolution was rather suddenly taken in consequence of an invitation from a Committee of the Commissioners for the Northern Lights namely Wm. Erskine, Bob Hamilton and Adam Duff who with Stevenson the celebrated engineer are to sail upon a tour round the islands of Orkney Shetland and the Hebrides, touching at every remarkable point whether on continent or isle. I have accepted a cot in their cabbin stipulating for a day at Torloisk : more I doubt I cannot reckon upon for our voyage will necessarily be a long one : I expect much satisfaction in this excursion and believe me the pleasure of seeing you all is not the least part of the anticipation.

Mrs. Scott keeps house here in my absence with the bairns. They are growing fast up upon us, so wills father Time. Morritt was not above a fortnight in Paris—

Mrs. M is somewhat better but I fear she will [never] again enjoy confirmed health and to him she would be a most inexpressible deprivation. He goes down to Rokeby alone for a week and then they are to settle for the autumn in some place on the South west coast for the benefit of her health. You know he is again in Parliamt. Member for Northallerton. I am glad of it as occupation will divert his spirits from the melancholy prospect at home.— I have not heard of Lady Hood lately. Indeed it is my own fault for I am a wretched correspondent—poor Caberfae is I fear totally comatose and the conclusion of the scene greatly to be wished for.

Yes—I am a great planter—for my extent the greatest perhaps in Scotland for where do you hear of a laird planting one half of his estate and I literally have about sixty acres or more intended for woodland. It is the only rural occupation properly so called to which I am [inclined] for my farming is a matter of compulsion. Upon all this I hope for a long colloquy with Mrs. Clephane—so you may exercise your fair eyes about three weeks hence in looking out for a sail in the Sound. We have a very nice cutter and sail on the 27th so I suppose we shall be off Mull about the end of August when we may pray to Saint Kenneth in the words of the Boat Song

Saint of the Green Isle hear our prayer
Send us soft waves and favouring air.

If the Saint be inexorable there will be a sea-sick minstrel and thats the upshot on't.

Mrs. Scott sends best love to Mrs. Clephane and Miss Anna Jane in which the young folks cordially join. Believe me my dear Miss Clephane yours most truly and respectfully

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 23 *July* 1814.

[*Northampton*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE¹

MY DEAR SIR,—I re-enclose the missives, which do not, in two particulars, quite meet my meaning. In the first place, although I do not foresee the least chance of any change in my continuing to employ your house as agents for my moiety, yet I cannot with any prudence bind myself specially to do so in all time coming, or under all circumstances which may occur in the manifold changes of life. At the same time, I would not wish to derange your calculations; and therefore I think you will be safe by a positive bargain as to all the editions which may be published during the years 1815 and 1816—which will probably be a good many; nor have I the least idea of anything occurring to induce me to change this arrangement afterwards; only it would render my property much less valuable should it at any time be sold, either in my life or after my death, if it was clogg'd with a positive obligation to use any house as agent exclusively. The other circumstance I have to notice is, that Longman's house will probably think they ought to have half of the whole bargain, that is half of the agency, as well as the property. Should you wish any time to consider this matter, the bargain may be limited to one-half of the poem, and the rest left to stand till my return. There is a good deal in the reasons you urge, and if Longman's people were to be satisfied, I am sure I would be content. But I doubt they will not consider themselves as well used; and you know I have powerful reasons (besides their uniform handsome conduct) for not disobliging them. By limiting the agency to every edition of the poem which may be published in 1815 and 1816, which you can do by an interlineation, No. I. will quite suit my idea of the transaction. If you can, by any bargain with

¹ The arrangements being made are for the publication of the *Lord of the Isles*, as Constable's endorsement shows. Of two forms of agreement sent, Scott prefers No. I., of which the full statement follows in another letter.

L. and Co., get off the 10 per cent. in this case, which I would think very fair, I should be very well pleased.

I keep the bills, as there is no danger of our differing ; and when you return me No. I., with limitations, I will send you the acceptance.—Yours truly, W. SCOTT

27 July 1814

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—After taking a night to think of it, I think we must necessarily abide by No. I. I would willingly oblige you, but the risk of disobliging our friends in the Row, which they would probably only express negatively, yet feel very sensibly, is not to be encountered. Even your friendship, trammelled as you are by other engagements in the printing way, could not remedy the inconvenience that might arise from our friends admitting any of those feelings of jealousy at a preference, to which the Trade are so particularly open. They possess the power, and have uniformly shown the inclination, to be steady friends, and I would wish them to see that I consider them as such. I will never want opportunities enough (of which one has lately occurred) to be of some use to Edinburgh but in London it is only on an occasion of this kind that my friends will look for some mark of my remembrance.

I need not say how much I shall be satisfied to transfer the Bond from 12 to 8 per cent. Indeed, I trust to be able to clear off a large part of it next Whitsunday.

“ The boat rocks at the pier of Leith,
The wind blows blithely down the ferry ;
The ship rides at the Inch of Keith,
And I maun neither stop nor tarry.”

W. S.

Thursday 28 July [1814]

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

From and to CONSTABLE AND CO.

[Copy ¹.]

EDINBURGH 27 July 1814

DEAR SIR,—We hereby agree to your proposals respecting the publication of a new poem entitled the Lord of the Isles which is to be put to press so as to be publishd early in January next and to be of a size similar to the Lady of the Lake.

We are to pay you the sum of Fifteen hundred Guineas for one half share of the Copy right by promissory notes to be granted as follows viz

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Note dated 27 July at 4 mos. pr. | £380 |
| 1 | Do " " at 5 mos. | 380— |
| 1 | Do " " " 6 — | 380— |
| 1 | Do " " " 8 — | 435— |
| | | <hr/> |

£1,575

We are also to have the whole Bookselling management of the publication & to have the sale of the whole of every edition of the poem which shall be publishd during the years 1815 & 1816 on settling with you for one half of the whole sale profits on the remaining half of the property which you retain as nearly as the sum can be fixd upon immediatly on each edition coming from the press without putting you to any trouble or advance for the expence of your half of each impression respectively and to grant you an acceptance for your said moiety of profit at such a date as may be considered likely to meet our returns from the Trade.

We are to offer Messrs. Longman & Co of London one half of our share being one quarter of the whole property on these conditions also an equal interest with ours in the sale of your half of all editions of the poem

We remain etc

(signd) ARCHD. CONSTABLE & Co

Walter Scott Esq

P.S. We are to take the publication of Somervilles Memoirs paying for paper & print half of this also to be offerd to Longman & Co

(signd) A. C. & Co

¹ This copy is written in Scott's hand.

GENTLEMEN,—What is written upon the former page of this letter is a copy of your letter to me of the 27th. the terms of which are hereby accepted by me—I have at the same time to acknowledge the receipt of the four acceptances therein described and am Gentlemen Your most obedient Servant

WALTER SCOTT

CASTLE STREET 28th. *July* 1814

[*Stevenson*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

DEAR JAMES,—Please to enquire at Post office the course of post for Orkney & calculating your letter accordingly let me hear from [you] at Kirkwall, Orkney care of W. Erskine Esq Sheriff Depute—write *generally* in case of miscarriage. My next stage will I think be the Hebrides when the only address I can think of will be Torloisk as I gave you before—I shall be desirous to hear of Johns departure the Register etc—also of the progress of Somers & Somerville—Do not omit to take good advice as to the proofs when any difficulty occurs.

I wish in your dramatic criticisms you would upon my judgement attend a little to a Miss Douglas¹ who played Elvira last night.

She has a charming voice and other necessary requisites with no small share of judgement at least as she struck me—I think with attention & encouragement she will one day make an excellent performer. Remember me kindly to Young. Yours ever

W. S.

CASTLE STREET *Friday* [29th *July* 1814]

We sail at 12 today.

[*Signet Library*]

¹ Mentioned as a member of the Edinburgh Theatre Royal Company, 1813-16, in Dibdin, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

TO JOSEPH TRAIN

SIR,—I received your Volume¹ with the enclosure just as I am setting out upon a pleasure Voyage. I intend to make your book companion of my tour and I shall find it a very pleasant one if the other poems (as I doubt not) bear a proportion of merit corresponding to *Elcine de Aggart*, in which there is only one bad line—it is the 4th of p. 111 which I wish you would revise ; something like this would complete the picture of subjugation—

“ They bring with them yokes for the neck of the hind.”

I don't mean that as a good line but it may suggest one having a special and distinct idea instead of a vague and general one as it stands at present.

I am not at all acquainted with Galloway traditions and stories and should be much obliged by any communication on these subjects. My return will be in about a month from this date when my address is Abbotsford by Melrose. I am, Sir, Your obliged Servant,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, 28 *July* 1814.

[*Mrs. Dunn*]

¹ *Strains of the Mountain Muse*. By Joseph Train. Edinburgh : Printed for the Author . . . 1814. “ *Elcine de Aggart* ” fills pp. 110-12.

Why gallops the palfrey with Lady Dunure ?
 Who takes away Turnberry's kine from the shore ?
 Go tell it in Carrick, and tell it in Kyle,
 Although the proud Dons are now passing the Moil,
 On this magic clue,
 That in Fairyland grew,
 Old *Elcine de Aggart* has taken in hand
 To wind up their lives ere they win to our strand, etc.

The line to which Scott takes exception runs :

“ They likewise bring fetters our barons to bind.”

The Poetical Reveries of Joseph Train had been published in Glasgow in 1806. There are worse poems than Train's.

To JOHN B. S. MORRITT

[PM. 28th July 1814]

MY DEAR MORRITT,—I am going to say my valeo to you for some weeks having accepted an invitation from a committee of the Commissioners for the Northern Lights (I dont mean the Edinburgh Reviewers but the bonâ fide commissioners for the Beacons) to accompany them upon a nautical tour round Scotland visiting all that is curious on continent and isle. The party are three gentlemen with whom I am very well acquainted William Erskine being one—we have a stout cutter well fitted up and mand for the service by government; and to make assurance double sure the Admiral has sent a sloop of war to cruise in the dangerous points of our tour and sweep the sea of the Yankee privateers which sometimes annoy our northern latitudes. I shall visit the Clephanes in their solitude—and let you know all that I see that is rare and entertaining which as we are masters of our time and vessell should add much to my stock of knowlege.

As to Waverley I will play Sir Fretful¹ for once and assure you that I left the story to flag in the 1st volume on purpose—the second and third have rather more bustle and interest. I wishd (with what success heaven knows) to avoid the ordinary error of novel-writers whose first volume is usually their best. But since it has served

¹ Sir Fretful Plagiary in Sheridan's *The Critic*, supposed to be drawn after Richard Cumberland. Morritt had written on the 14th July to "thank you for the castle of Tully Veolan & the delightful drinking bout at Lucky Macleays no less than for the characters of the Laird of Balmawhapple, the Baron of Bradwardine & Davie Gellatly who I take to be a transcript of William Rose's motley follower commonly yclept Caliban. If the completion of the story is equal to what we have just devoured it deserves a place amongst our standard works &c." On the 21st he writes that they have finished *Waverley*: "I wish however with all my heart I could persuade you to own it at once . . . the volumes we have just read would add to the fame of the best poet in the language . . . no man who ever heard you tell a story over a table but must I think recognise you in a moment both in the fun & the sentiment." On the question of language he goes on to object to "relatives" for "relations" and the French word *sombre* for "gloomy" or "murky."

to amuse Mrs. Morritt and you usque ab initio I have no doubt you will tolerate it even unto the end. It may really boast to be a tolerably faithful portrait of Scottish manners and has been recognised as such in Edinburgh. The first edition of a thousand instantly disappeared and the bookseller informs me that the second of double the quantity will not supply the market very long.

As I shall be very anxious to know how Mrs. Morritt is, I hope to find a few lines from you on my return which will be about the end of August or beginning of September. We sail on the 27. I should have mentioned that we have the celebrated engineer Stevenson along with us. I delight in these professional men of talent: they always give you some new lights by the peculiarity of their habits and studies so different from the people who are rounded and smoothed and ground down for conversation and who can say all that every other person says and—nothing more.

What a miserable thing it is that our royal family cannot be quiet and decent at least if not correct and moral in their deportment. Old farmer George's manly simplicity modesty of expence and domestic virtue saved this country at its most perilous crisis for it is inconceivable the number of persons whom these qualities united in his behalf who would have felt but coldly the abstract duty of supporting a crown less worthily worn.

I had just proceeded thus far when your kind favour of the 21 reachd Abbotsford. I am heartily glad you continued to like Waverley to the end—the hero is a sneaking piece of imbecility and if he had married Flora she would have set him up upon the chimney-piece as Count Boralaski's wife¹ used to do with him. I am a

¹ One of the first books printed by James Ballantyne was *Memoirs of the celebrated dwarf, Joseph Borowlaski, A Polish Gentleman*. Translated from the original French of M. Borowlaski, and carefully revised and corrected. Kelso . . . 1801. A native of Poland he resided at Paris till the Revolution. In this country he exhibited himself at fairs till he made enough to retire and live in the country. He died at Durham in 1837 and is buried in the Cathedral.

bad hand at depicting a heroe properly so calld and have an unfortunate propensity for the dubious characters of Borderers Buccaneers highland robbers and all others of a Robin Hood description. I do not know why it should be so [as] I am myself like Hamlet indifferent honest but I suppose the blood of the old cattle-drivers of Teviotdale continues to stir in my veins—I shall not own Waverley—my chief reason is that it would prevent me of the pleasure of writing again. David Hume Nephew of the historian says the author must be of a jacobite family and predilections, a yeomanry cavalry man and a Scottish lawyer and desires me to guess in whom these happy attributes are united. I shall not plead guilty however and as such seems to be the fashion of the day I hope charitable people will believe my affidavit in contradiction to all other evidence. The Edinr. faith now is that Waverley is written by Jeffery having been composed to lighten the toedium of his transatlantic voyage. So you see the unknown infant is like to come to preferment. In truth I am not sure it would be considerd quite decorous for me as a Clerk of Session to write novels Judges being monks clerks are a sort of lay-brethren from whom some solemnity of walk & conduct may be expected. So whatever I may do of this kind I shall whistle it down the wind to prey on fortune. I will take care in the next edition to make the corrections you recommend—the second is I believe nearly through the press. It will hardly be printed faster than it was written for though the first volume was begun long ago & actually lost for a time yet the other two were begun & finishd between the 4th June & the 1st July during all which I attended my duty in court and proceeded without loss of time or hindrance of business.

I wish for poor auld Scotlands sake and for the *manes* of Bruce and Wallace and for the living comfort of a very worthy and ingenious dissenting clergyman who has collected a library and collection of medals of

some value and brought up I believe sixteen or seventeen children (his wife's ambition extended to twenty) upon about £150 a year—I say I wish for all these reasons you could get me among your wealthy friends a name or two for the inclosed proposals.¹ The price is I think too high but the Booksellers fixd it two guineas above what I proposed. I trust it will be yet lowerd to 5 guineas which is a more comeatable sum than six. The poems themselves are great curiosities both to the philologist and Antiquary and that of Bruce is invaluable even to the historian. They have been hitherto wretchedly edited.

All here join in love to Mrs. Morritt. Pray write in about a month at farthest that I may hear of you when I return home as I am truly anxious about Mrs. M. I leave this for Edinr. tomorrow.

I think Burdett is gone mad—and these men pretend to believe Lord Mellville guilty of peculation—but it is the old Scottish administration of justice. Show me the *man* & I'll show you the *law*—I am glad you are not to pay for this scrawl—Ever yours

WALTER SCOTT.

Kind respects to Lady Louisa. I know nothing whatever of the Vale of Clyde.²

I dont see how my silence can be considered as imposing on the public—if I gave my name to a book without writing it, unquestionably that would be a trick. But unless in the case of his averring facts which he may be calld upon to defend or justify I think an author may use his own discretion in giving or withholding his name. Harry Mackenzie never put his name in a title page till the last edition of his works and Swift only ownd one out of his thousand and one publications.

¹ Dr. Jamieson's editions of *The Bruce* and *The Wallace*.

² "Pray tell me whether a certain poem advertised by Longman & Rees under the title of *Cona* or the *Vale of Clwyd* together with the fourth Edition of *Triermain* is written by the unknown author of that immortal work."—MORRITT.

In point of emolument every body knows that I sacrifice much money by withholding my name and what should I gain by it that any human being has a right to consider as an unfair advantage—in fact only the freedom of writing trifles with less personal responsibility and perhaps more frequently than I otherwise might do.

W. S.

[*Law*]

TO CHARLES, DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

LIGHT HOUSE YACHT IN THE SOUND
OF LERWICK ZETLAND *8th Augt 1814*¹

HEALTH to the Chieftain from his clansman true
From her true minstrel Health to fair Buccleuch
Health from the isles where Dawn at morning weaves
Her chaplet with the tints that twilight leaves
Where late the Sun scarce vanishd from the sight
And his bright path-way graced the short-lived night
Though darker now as autumns shades extend
The north winds whistle and the mists ascend—
Health from the land where eddying whirl-winds toss
The storm-rockd *cradle* ² of the Cape of Noss
On out-stretchd cords the giddy engine slides
His own strong arm the bold adventurer guides
And he that lists such desperate feat to try
May like the sea mew skim twixt surf & sky

¹ Scott reached Lerwick on the 4th August and stayed there some days. On the 7th he dined at Tingwall with "our friend Parson Turnbull who had come over in our yacht" (a relative of the present editor). On the 8th the yacht, which had gone north with some of the party, returned to Lerwick. Scott evidently began this letter then, and continued it on the 9th, when on waking he found the ship had left Lerwick and "was entering the sound which divides the small island of Mousa from Coningsburgh." They visited the famous Pictish castle on Mousa, and in the evening "beat down to Sumburgh-head through rough weather." This rhyming letter is almost entirely without punctuation.

² A machine so call'd which slides by two iron rings upon two cords from a very high rock in the isle of Noss to another rock which is divided from it by a narrow channel of the sea. The adventurer flies over a chasm of about 500 feet high warp'd along by his own hands. A most dizzy operation. (Scott's footnote.)

And feel the mid-air gales around him blow
And see the billows rage five hundred feet below—
Here by each stormy peak and desert shore
The hardy isles-man tugs the daring oar
Practised alike his venturous course to keep
Through the white breakers or the pathless deep
By ceaseless peril & by toil to gain
A wretched pittance from the niggard main.
And when the worn out drudge the ocean leaves
What comfort cheers him & what hut receives ?
Lady the worst thy presence ere has cheerd
(When want and sorrow fled as you appeard)
Were to a Zetlanders as the high dome
Of proud Drumlanrig to my humble home
Here rise no groves & here no gardens blow
Here even the hardy heath scarce deigns to grow
But rocks on rocks in mist and storm arrayd
Stretch far to sea their giant colonade
With many a cavern seam'd, the dreary haunt
Of the dun seal and swarthy cormorant
Wild round their rifted brows, with frequent cry
As of lament, the gulls & gannets fly
And from their sable base with sullen sound
In sheets of whitening foam the waves rebound.

Yet even these coasts a touch of envy gain
From those whose land has known oppressions chain
For here the industrious¹ Dutchman comes once more
To moor his fishing craft by Brassa's shore
Greets every former mate and brother tar
Marvels how Lerwick scaped the rage of war
Tells many a tale of Gallic outrage done
And ends by blessing God & Wellington.

¹ We heard of some very affecting greetings between the Dutchmen & the natives of Lerwick, who had not seen a fishing schuyt for many years till this season. The poor Dutchmen seemd quite impoverishd & expressd great wonder that the fishing town of Lerwick had thriven during the war. (Scott's footnote.)

Here too the Greenland tar—a fiercer guest—
Claims a brief hour of riot not of rest
Proves each wild frolic that in wine has birth
And wakes the land with brawls and boisterous mirth

A sadder sight on yon poor vessell's prow
The captive Norse-man sits in silent woe,
And eyes the flags of Britain as they flow.
Hard fate of war which bade her terrors sway
His destined course and seize so mean a prey—
A bark with planks so warpd & seams so riven
She scarce might face the gentlest airs of heaven
Pensive he sits and questions oft if none
Can list his speech and understand his moan
In vain—no islesman now can use the tongue
Of the bold Norse from whom their lineage sprung.

Not thus of old the Norsemen hither came
Won by the love of danger or of fame
On every storm-beat cape a shapeless tower
Tells of their wars their conquests & their power
For nor for Grecia's vales nor Latian land
Was fiercer strife than for this barren strand—
A race severe, the isle and ocean-lords
Loved for its own delights the strife of swords
With scornful laugh the mortal pang defied
And blessd their Gods that they in battle died

Such were the sires of Zetlands simple race
And still the eye may faint resemblance trace
In the blue eye, tall form, proportion fair,
The limbs athletic and the long light hair
(Such was the mien as Scald and minstrel sings
Of Fair-haired Harold first of Norway's Kings)
But their high deeds to scale those crags confined
Their only warfare is with waves & wind.

Why should I tell of Mousa's castled coast
Why of the horrors of the Sumburgh-rost ¹

¹ A furious race of tide off Sumburghhead. (Scott's footnote.)

May not these bald disjointed lines suffice
Penn'd while my comrades whirl the rattling dice
While down the cabbin-skylight lessening shine
The rays & eve is chaced with mirth & wine
Imagined while down Mousa's desert bay
Our well trimd vessell urged her nimble way
While to the freshening breeze she leand her side.
And bade her boltsprit kiss the foamy tide—
Such are the lays that Zetlands isles supply—
Drenchd with the drizzly spray and dropping sky
Weary & wet a sea-sick Minstrel I.— W. SCOTT

POSTSCRIPT

In respect that your Grace has commisiond a Kraken
You will please be informd that they seldom are taken
It is January two years, the Zetland folks say
Since they saw the last Kraken in Scalloway-bay
He lay in the offing a fortnight or more
But the devil a Zetlander put from the shore
Though bold in the seas of the North to assail
The morse and the sea-horse the grampus and whale
If your Grace thinks I'm writing the thing that is not
You may ask at a namesake of ours Mr. Scott
(He's not from our land though his merits deserve it
But springs I'm informd from the Scotts of Scotstarvet)
He questiond the folks who beheld it with eyes
But they differd confoundedly as to its size
For instance the modest & diffident swore
That it loom'd like the keel of a ship and no more
Those of eye-sight more clear or of fancy more high
Said it rose like an island twixt ocean & sky
But all of the hulk had a steady opinion
That twas sure a *live* subject of Neptunes dominion
And I think my Lord Duke your Grace would not wish
To cumber your house, such a kettle of fish.
Had your order related to night-caps or hose
Or mittens of worsted there's plenty of those

Or would you be pleased but to fancy a whale,
 And direct me to send it by sea or by mail,
 The season I'm told is nigh over but still
 I could get you one fit for the lake at Bowhill
 Indeed as to whales there's no need to be thrifty
 Since one day last fortnight two hundred & fifty
 Pursued by seven Orkney-men's boats & no more
 Betwixt Triffness and Liffness were driven on the shore.
 You'll ask if I saw this same wonder with sight
 I own that I did not, but easily might—
 For this mighty shoal of leviathans lay
 On our lee-beam a mile, in the loop of the bay
 And the islesmen of Sanda were all at the spoil
 And *flinching* (so term it) the blubber to boil
 (Ye spirits of lavender drown the reflection
 That awakes at the thoughts of this odorous dissection)
 To see this huge marvel full fain would we go
 But Wilson¹ the winds & the current said no.

We have now got to Kirkwall & needs I must stare
 When I think that in verse I have once call'd it *fair*
 'T is a base little burgh both dirty & mean
 There's nothing to hear & theres nought to be seen
 Save a Church where of old times a prelate harangued
 And a palace that's built by an Earl that was hanged
 But farewell to Kirkwall—aboard we are going
 The anchor's a peak & the breezes are blowing
 Our Commodore calls all his band to their places
 And 't is time to relieve you—Goodnight to your Graces.

KIRKWALL ORKNEY 13 *Augt.* 1814

[*Buccleuch*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

KIRKWALL, ORKNEY, 13th *August* 1814

DEAR JAMES,—I have hitherto accomplished my voyage
 very well among these rough seas, and with no very
 favourable weather. We have seen all that is remarkable

¹ Master of the cutter. (Scott's footnote.)

in Shetland, and arrived here yesterday. I was rather surprized not to find a letter from you, but presume it may be in next post, in which case I may yet receive it. I have seen some of the grandest and most tremendous sea scenery in the world, without more inconvenience than *roughing* it a little in the rain and spray, and occasional sickness, but only when the weather has been severe and the ship rolling very much. I have not found it necessary to have recourse to your remedy. We leave this place to-night, but shall have such letters as may arrive on Monday forwarded after us to another part of the island of Pomona by express. After this I shall be out of cry untill I reach Torloisk. I suppose you have already written to me to Mrs. Maclean Clephane's care ; if not, that direction will be too late after this reaches you, and you will be pleased to write without a day's delay to me to the Care of Colonel MacNeil, Carskey,¹ Campbelltown. Always remember, your letters may likely miscarry, and express yourself accordingly ; and in answering this letter, suppose it likely that I may not have received your former letters.—I remain yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

LIGHT HOUSE YACHT, OFF DUNSTAFFNAGE,
NEAR OBAN, 1st Sept. 1814

DEAR JAMES,—I am here after a very pleasant, though occasionally a stormy, voyage ; but we have seen everything that is curious, and much that is seldom seen or heard of. We have now circumnavigated the greater part of Scotland ; to-day we stand across the narrow

¹ Colonel Macneil of Carskey was, I am told, a friend of Scott's, and he and his family well known in Campbeltown. The property was sold by his grand-nephew, Colonel Mackay, in the nineties of last century, and is now in the ownership of one of the Coates family. "It is a pretty place quite near the Mull of Kintyre and beyond the village of Southend."

channel for Ireland, to visit the Giant's Causeway, which is the ultimate object of our voyage. After this we return to Greenock, to which place be so kind as to address me, *Post-office, to remain till called for.* In no respect fail to do this by return of post. I conclude I shall be at Greenock in eight days, but say by the 10th or 12 at furthest, and shall then come to Edinr. I conclude you have written, by my former direction, to the care of a gentleman near Campbelltown, which letter I shall not, however, receive for two or three days. I found no letter for me at Torloisk. Make my service to Mr. Constable, and tell him I am not

—killed by Hieland bodies
Nor eaten like a weather Haggis.

I suppose John is by this time off and nearly returned, and trust you have been managing with address in his absence.—Yours in haste,

WALTER SCOTT

I shall be ready to start *strong on scenery*, if that will do good.

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

6 August¹ [1814]

DEAR JAMES,—I got your *two* letters this morning, and a very friendly one from our friend Constable to the same purpose. I am very sorry for these perplexities, but am always less vexed with those for which a good reason can be assigned than when things run on a heap without reasonable cause or due information. We are now off Campbellton, but in a squally day, with the wind right against us.

¹ Scott has written "August" here and below for "September." Constable corrects and adds the year.

8th August

I could not get this ashore at Campbelltown, the weather being very rough. We have since been in a calm, and made no way almost at all. At length, however, we are within two miles of Greenock, and I judge it best to send this off immediatly, to say I shall be at Edinr. to-morrow, by dinner time, and will take my beefsteak in St. John Street, if not inconvenient for you, of which you will apprize me by a line. I shall find probably a letter for me at Greenock, which I shall not, however, answer, unless it contains something requiring instant dispatch.

The blow I received some days since from the unexpected tidings of the death of the D[uchess] of B[uccleuch]¹ has given me such a shock as made me very insensible to other bad intelligence. I have little doubt of getting things arranged, though of course D. and S.'s failure will occasion great loss and additional inconvenience. You had better ask Constable to dine with us.

[Constable and Kilpatrick]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

MY DEAR SIR,—I had your favour this morning, and am particularly obliged to you for your kindness in writing. I trust there will be no great difficulty in arranging the matters you mention, as they are now so much narrowed in compass as to be manageable, and the ultimate security of every kind is now super-abundant. But, of course, at such a pinch as this, there may be some plague and trouble ; but for all our sakes, our lively little friend *must be carried through*. I am writing within sight of Campbelltown, but in a heavy squall, so that I have

¹ Scott writes "D. of B.," which Constable in the Rosebery volume has carelessly made the "Duke of Buccleuch," and *Archibald Constable*, etc. follows suit.

to secure my paper with one hand, and write as I best can with the other, and I trust to get my letter ashore to the post office with one to J. B., from whom I heard to the same purpose as from you. I shall send him some means of answering any present pressure, in case I should find it impossible to get to Edinr. by the 10th, which however is, I trust, very unlikely, as I hope to be at Greenock or Ayr, as the wind will best serve me, to-morrow. We have had a most delightful and instructive voyage, and have visited everything that is curious in the Scottish Isles from Shetland to Ilay, not to mention the Giant's Causeway on the Irish coast, which we saw yesterday. So I trust we shall be very soon ready to go to press with the Lord of the Isles. I am glad our little love-begotten babe walks briskly, though without the advantage of a father's name. I trust we may give him a brother or sister in Summer.

I confide in your assistance in helping to keep things strait till I can get to the helm upon the 11th or 12th. I have no incumbrances which can prevent my getting things squared with a little assistance, and this you may rely upon implicitly. I cannot write more than the needful at present, being much distressed with the unexpected and most melancholy incident at Dalkeith, which I only heard two days since at Dr. Richardson's, at Portrush in Ireland. You may guess what a dreadful shock it was. Everything is flying about the vessell in such a stile that I must close abruptly.—Yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT

LIGHT HOUSE YACHT, OFF CAMPBELLTOWN,

6 Sept. 1814¹

There are no horses to be had at Campbellton, otherwise I would take that mode of travelling ; but I

¹ Scott writes "6 Aug.," but strokes it out and writes "6 Sept." Nevertheless below he writes "Postscript 8th August," which Constable corrects in printing.

think we cannot miss getting either to Greenock or Ayr very soon.

Postscript, 8th September.—We could not send this letter ashore for the stormy weather, and have since been pestered with calms, but we are now about to land at Greenock, so that I shall be in Edinburgh to-morrow by dinner-time. We find we have been once or twice very near an American Cruizer—a capture would have been a pretty job ! I did not send any inclosure to J. B., as I shall be so soon at home—within a few hours after you have this.

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

MY DEAR JAMES,—I received all your letters at Greenock, and in consequence of the last resume my intention of spending one day at Killermont and returning with our friend W. E[rskine]. I cannot at present write explicitly on business, but highly approve of what you have done, and have no fear whatever of the results. Time and I, says the Spanish proverb, against any two. I will not therefore dine with you to-morrow, but rather wish you to breakfast with me on Sunday, or to call on Saturday night about seven or eight o'clock. I wish I could as easily wash my deep sorrow out of my mind as I can dismiss the apprehensions of the loss of world's gear ; but I am most deeply distressed indeed on account of the generous and noble survivor, and the more than kind friend whom I have lost.—Yours ever,

W. SCOTT

ON BOARD THE STEAM BOAT
BETWEEN GREENOCK AND GLASGOW

Thursday 5 o'clock [PM. Sept. 8, 1814]

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO CHARLES, DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

GLASGOW, *Augt.* [*Sept.*]¹ 8, 1814

MY DEAR LORD DUKE,—I take the earliest opportunity, after landing, to discharge a task so distressing to me, that I find reluctance and fear even in making the attempt, and for the first time address so kind and generous a friend without either comfort and confidence in myself, or the power of offering a single word of consolation to his affliction. I learned the late calamitous news (which indeed no preparation could have greatly mitigated) quite unexpectedly, when upon the Irish coast; nor could the shock of an earth quake have affected me in the same proportion. Since that time I have been detained at sea, thinking of nothing but what has happened, and of the painful duty I am now to perform. If the deepest interest in this inexpressible loss could qualify me for expressing myself upon a subject so distressing, I know few whose attachment and respect for the lamented object of our sorrows can or ought to exceed my own, for never was more attractive kindness and condescension displayed by one of her sphere, or returned with deeper and more heartfelt gratitude by one in my own. But selfish regret and sorrow, while they claim a painful and unavailing ascendance, cannot drown the recollection of the virtues lost to the world just when their scene of acting had opened wider, and to her family when the prospect of their speedy entry upon life rendered her precept and example peculiarly important. And such an example! for of all whom I have ever seen, in whatever rank, she possessed most the power of rendering virtue lovely and combining purity of feeling and soundness of judgement with a sweetness and affability which won the affections of all who had the happiness of approaching her. And this is the partner of whom it has been God's

¹ This letter again Scott has dated "August," though he was then at Kirkwall. Lockhart corrects. The Duchess died on the 24th August.

pleasure to deprive your Grace, and the friend for whom I now sorrow, and shall sorrow while I can remember any thing. The recollection of her excellencies can but add bitterness, at least in the first pangs of calamity ; yet it is impossible to forbear the topic—it rises to my pen as to my thoughts, till I almost call in question, for an instant, the Eternal Wisdom which has so early summoned her from this wretched world, where pain and grief and sorrow is our portion, to join those to whom her virtues, while upon earth, gave her so strong a resemblance. Would to God I could say, *be comforted* ; but I feel every common topic of consolation must be, for the time at least, even an irritation to affliction. Grieve, then, my dear Lord, or I should say my dear and much honoured friend, for Sorrow for the time levels the highest distinctions of rank ; but do not grieve as those who have no hope. I know the last earthly thoughts of the departed sharer of your joys and sorrows must have been for your Grace and the dear pledges she has left to your care. Do not, for their sake, suffer grief to take that exclusive possession which disclaims care for the living, and is not only useless to the dead, but is what their wishes would have most earnestly deprecated. To time, and to God, whose are both Time and Eternity, belongs the office of future consolation ; it is enough to require from the sufferer under such a dispensation to bear his burthen of sorrow with fortitude, and to resist those feelings which prompt us to believe that that which is galling and grievous is therefore altogether beyond our strength to support. Most bitterly do I regret some levity¹ which I fear must have reached you when your distress was most poignant, and most dearly have I paid for venturing to anticipate the time which is not ours, since I received these deplorable news at the very moment when I was collecting some trifles that I thought might give satisfaction to the person whom I so highly honoured, and

¹ The verse-letter written from the yacht on the 8th August.

who, among her numerous excellencies, never failed to seem pleased with what she knew was meant to afford her pleasure.

But I must break off, and have perhaps already written too much. I learn by a letter from Mrs. Scott, this day received, that your Grace is at Bowhill—in the beginning of next week I will be in the vicinity ; and when your Grace can receive me without additional pain, I will have the honor of waiting upon you. I remain, with the deepest sympathy, my Lord Duke, your Grace's truly distressed and most grateful servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Buccleuch and Lockhart*]

TO CHARLES, DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

EDINBURGH, 11th Sept. 1814

MY DEAR LORD DUKE,—I received your letter¹ (which had missed me at Greenock) upon its being returned to this place, and cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for the kindness which, at such a moment, could undertake the task of writing upon such a subject to relieve the feelings of a friend—depend upon it, I am so far worthy of your Grace's kindness, that, among many proofs of it, this affecting and most distressing one can never be forgotten. It gives me great though melancholy satisfaction, to find that your Grace has had the manly and Christian fortitude to adopt that resigned and patient frame of spirit, which can extract from the most bitter calamity a wholesome mental medicine. I trust in God, that, as so many and such high duties are attached to your station, and as he has blessed you with the disposition that finds pleasure in the discharge of them, your

¹ A beautiful letter from the Duke at Bowhill, 3rd September 1814 : "Knowing her sincere friendship for you I have thought it right to give you these details, as I am sure it will give you pleasure, tho' a melancholy one, to know from me that her last moments were such as to be envied by every lover of virtue, piety, and true and genuine religion."

Grace will find your first exertions, however painful, rewarded with strength to persevere, and finally with that comfort which attends perseverance in that which is right. The happiness of hundreds depends upon your Grace almost directly, and the effect of your example in the country, and of your constancy in support of a constitution daily undermined by the wicked and designing, is almost incalculable. Justly, then, and well, has your Grace resolved to sacrifice all that is selfish in the indulgence of grief, to the duties of your social and publick situation. Long may you have health and strength to be to your dear and hopeful family an example and guide in all that becomes their high rank. It is enough that one light—and alas ! what a light that was !—has been recalled by the divine Will to [an]other and a better sphere.

I wrote a hasty and unconnected letter immediately on landing. I am detained for two days in this place, but wait upon your Grace immediately on my return to Abbotsford. If my society cannot, in the circumstances give much pleasure, it will, I trust, impose no restraint.

Mrs. Scott desires me to offer her deepest sympathy upon this calamitous occasion. She has much reason, for she has lost the countenance of a friend such as she cannot expect the course of human life can again supply. I am ever, with much and affectionate respect, your Grace's truly faithful humble servant, WALTER SCOTT

[Buccleuch and Lockhart]

To JAMES MACCULLOCH

DEAR SIR,—I find your letter upon my return from a long voyage (for a landsman) of six whole weeks round the coast of Scotland & among the islands. I hoped ever to have been on the coast of Galloway & should in that case have disturbd your gruel at Ardwall but our time obliged us to disembark at Greenock.

You know the most deplorable event that has taken place in the Buccleuch family, an event which all connected with that House have so much reason to lament. My own share in the general sorrow is deep and of a nature that will be lasting. The Duke has written to me and bears his misfortune with a fortitude which exceeds my hopes & expectation. You will see that our meetings cannot soon turn upon business but when, or if, I see an opportunity I will mention the subject of your letter— It will however be of little consequence for if the Duchess has mentioned the subject before her lamented death your friend will require no interest—if otherwise it is the Duke's maxim and I think an excellent one only to pay respect to those recommendations which are founded upon a personal knowledge of the candidate— At the same time I will always have pleasure in complying with every request of yours & request you to believe me Very much Yours faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 13 *Sept.* 1814

James McCulloch Esq of Ardwall
Gatehouse of Fleet Galloway.

[*Lady Ardwall*]

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT, M.P., MRS. SLATERS STAR HOTEL,
WORTHING

MY DEAR MORRITT,—At the end of my tour¹ on the 22 Augt!!! Lord help us—this comes of going to the Levant and the Hellespont and your Euxine and

¹ So Morritt had written on that day : “As I suppose you are ere now almost at the End of your tour this will be in time to welcome you back to Abbotsford. Mrs. Morritt is better. Your reasons for not owning Waverley are indeed cogent & have had the success which seldom attends reason in this world for they have convinced me that you are right and that I was wrong. The more I read of the book the more I liked it.” He suggests some corrections, *e.g.* “enquiring *of* or *for*” instead of “enquiring *at*”; also to compare young ladies to figures in Claud Lorraine's picture is not happy, as *his* figures are notoriously poor—“substitute Pussin.”

so forth. A poor devil who goes to Nova Zembla and Thule is treated as if he had been only walking as far as Barnard Castle or Cauldshiels Loch. I would have you to know I only returnd on the 10th Current and the most agreeable thing I found was your letter—I am sure you must know I had need of something pleasant for the news of the death of the kind the affectionate the generous & beautiful Dss of Buccleuch gave me a shock which to speak Gods truth could not have been exceeded unless in my own familys sustaining a similar deprivation. She was indeed a Light Set upon a Hill, had all the grace which the most accomplishd manners and the most affable address could give to those virtues by which she was raised still higher than by rank. As she always distinguishd me by her regard and confidence and as I had many opportunities of seeing her in the active discharge of duties in which she rather resembled a descended angel than an earthly being you will excuse my saying so much about my own feelings on an occasion when sorrow was universal—But I will drop the subject. The survivor has displayd a strength and firmness of mind seldom equald where the affection was so strong and mutual and where the habits arising from a very high station and commanding fortune often render self controul more difficult because so far from being habitual. I trust for his own sake as well as for that of thousands to whom his life is directly essential and for hundreds of thousands to whom his example is important that God as he has given him fortitude to bear this inexpressible shock will add strength of constitution to support him in the struggle. He has written to me on the occasion in a stile becoming a man and a Christian, submissive to the will of God and willing to avail himself of the consolations which remain among his family and freinds. I am going to see him and how we shall meet God knows but though “an iron man of iron mold” upon many of the occasions of

life in which I see people most affected and a peculiar contemner of the commonplace sorrow which I see paid to the departed this is a case in which my Stoicism will not serve me. They both gave me reason to think they loved me and I returned their regard with the most sincere attachment, the distinction of rank being I think set apart on all sides. But Gods will be done. I will dwell no longer upon this subject. It is much to learn Mrs. Morritt is so much better and that if I have sustained a severe wound from a quarter so little expected I may promise myself the happiness of Mrs. Morritt's recovery.

I will shortly mention the train of our voyage reserving particulars till another day. We sailed from Leith skirted the Scottish coast visiting the Bùllers of Buchan and other remarkable objects—went to Shetland—thence to Orkney—from thence round Cape Wrath to the Hebrides making descents every where, where there was anything to be seen—Thence to Lewis and the Long Island—to Sky—to Iona and so forth lingering among the Hebrides as long as we could—Then we stood over to the coast of Ireland and visited the Giants Causeway and Port Rush where Dr. Richardson the Inventor (Discoverer I would say) of the celebrated Fiorin Grass resides. By the way he is a chattering Charlatan and his fiorin a mere humbug—But if he were Cicero and his invention were potatoes or anything equally useful I should detest the recollection of the place and the man for it was there I learned the death of my friend—Adieu my dear Morritt kind Compliments to your Lady like “poor Tom I cannot daub it further.”

When I hear where you are and what you are doing I will write you a more cheerful epistle. Poor Mackenzie¹ too is gone—the brother of our Lady Hood and another Mackenzie son to the man of

¹ The Hon. William Frederick Mackenzie, Lord Seaforth's son, died 25th September.

feeling so short time have I been absent and such has been the harvest of mortality among those whom I regarded.

I will attend to your corrections in Waverley. My principal employment for the autumn will be reducing the knowlege I have acquired of the localities of the Islands into scenery and stage-room for the "Lord of the Isles" of which renowned romance I think I have repeated some portions to you. It was elder born than Rokeby though it gave place to it in publishing.

After all scribbling is an odd propensity. I dont believe there is any ointment even that of the Edinburgh Review which can cure the infected—Once more yours entirely

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 14 *Sept.* [PM. 1814]

Address Abbotsford as usual.

[*Law*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE¹

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter, and whatever might be the disappointment, I never could seriously think of resenting what you do from a necessary attention to your own interest. Indeed, whatever is to hurt or run great risk of hurting *you*, cannot serve *me* as matters stand. As all these acceptances, however, without any important exception, are for value of one kind or other,

¹ "The following letters of Mr. Scott, with one from John Ballantyne, to my father, all written within a few weeks after the return from the Hebrides, bear witness to the close attention Mr Scott gave to the conduct of affairs, and for that reason they are quoted, though in the absence of the correspondence that led to them, and which they elicited, only an imperfect view is afforded of the transactions."—*Constable and his Literary Correspondents*, vol. iii. p. 61. Three sources for Constable's letters are accessible: (1) Constable's own collections, represented by Mr. Kilpatrick's volume of Scott letters, the Barnbougle print of these, the collections in several volumes presented to the National Library by Mrs. Forsyth, the reprint of these in *Archibald Constable*, etc.; (2) the Cadell letters of Mr. Stevenson, now in the Library; (3) Scott's letters to and from publishers at Abbotsford, now also in our Library. The letters here referred to are in none of these.

I hope they will be gradually withdrawn from the circle, since otherwise, in future transactions between us, which are likely to be large, this mass of paper will inconvenience us all. I wish, if it were not too much trouble, Mr. C[adell] and J[ohn] B[allantyne] would make a note of the dates at which these bills fall in, and where they are lying, marking the Swift bills so far as not already renewed to the full date. Of course all sorts of mutual accommodations will be afforded, but it would be satisfactory to see the currency of these engagements. This is the more necessary, because, although I cannot urge you to do what is out of course for my accommodation, and although I am equally anxious to give every accommodation even where I need acceptances in regular course of business, yet you must be aware that in my circumstances at present I will need to draw upon you (or rather J. B. will do so) for the Somerville Memoirs, or a moiety, which would do better, as Rees and you can settle it ; also for balance of author's profits on W., of which you were so good as to promise me a statement, which I presume will run from £250 to £300, or thereabout—and lastly, for the profits [of a] moiety of Lord of the Isles when published. I do not mean to press for acceptances on the account of the two first articles earlier than the beginning and middle of October, and I believe I can manage to have them cashed, if at short date, without going to the Edinburgh market. In the meantime I have applied for some cash to the Bank of Scotland, which I believe I shall get, to put by present demands.

I hope James Ballantyne is ready for the Poem, as I shall wish it to go to press instantly. I find I can get it out by Xmas, which will be a great advantage to all concerned. I think it should be advertised without an hour's delay—The Lord of the Isles : a Poem by Walter Scott, Esq. This might be made as public as you please, and as soon ; as it will put a different face upon our transactions. I have made up my mind to do my best

upon it, and I thank God that did I need (as who does not) a lesson of patience under the disappointments and struggles of life, I should find it in a friend at no great distance, who is bearing distress of a much deeper nature with the most manly fortitude. I shall beg to hear from you when you have a little time, and request you to let me know whether commercial matters are looking better, whether W.¹ sells, and so forth.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 17 *Sept.* [PM. 1814]

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you some time ago, mentioning that I would have occasion to draw upon you for balance due on *Waverley*, and now do so at six months for £300, holding myself and the next edition accountable for any over-draught. As I trust I shall be able to keep all my demands on your house, during these times of perplexity, within the rules of business, I hope I am not now exceeding them. Times of mutual accommodation will, I doubt not, return; at present I shall confine myself to the square, and have no doubt of your punctuality. At the same time I assure you, and have in some respect endeavoured to show it, that I retain full sense of the trouble you have had in our affairs. I would write a longer letter, but I fear I encroach upon your time, as I have not had the pleasure to hear from you, which I impute to the business of this anxious period. It will, I know, give you pleasure to learn I have got the accommodation I wished.—I remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, 26 *Sept.* [PM. 1814]

[*Constable and Kilpatrick*]

¹ i.e. *Waverley*.

TO REV. R. POLWHELE, KENWYN, TRURO¹

EDINBURGH, *Sept.* 1814

MY DEAR SIR,—Baal is neither dead nor sleeping ; he had only gone a journey which was likely to have landed him on the coast of Cornwall and near your door in this case I should have had the honour to have made your personal acquaintance. I have been engaged for these two months last upon a pleasure voyage with some friends. We had a good tight cutter well fitted up and manned, belonging to the service of the Northern Lighthouses of which department my friends are Commissioners. We therefore lived much at our ease and had our motions as much under our command as winds and waves would permit. We visited the Shetland and Orkney Isles and rounding the island by Cape Wrath, wandered for some time among the Hebrides ; then went to the Irish coast, and viewed the celebrated Giant's Causeway and would have pursued our voyage Heaven knows how far, but that the American privateers were a little too near us, and the risk of falling in with them cut short our cruise ; otherwise I might have landed upon the ancient shores of Corinæus and made the "*Fair Isabel*²" my introduction to the Bard of the West. I now return the MS. which I grieve I have detained so long. I hope, however, there will be no delay in getting it printed by January, which is I conceive the earliest approved publishing season. I believe I shall make another adventure myself about the same time upon a subject of Scottish history ; I have called my work the "*Lord of the Isles*." The greater part has been long written, but I am stupid at drawing ideal scenery, and waited until I should have a good opportunity to visit or rather re-visit the Hebrides, where the scene is partly laid.

¹ This letter is printed from the first of the sources corrected from the second in some words.

² *The Fair Isabel of Cotehele* . . . by the Author of *Local Attachment*, 1815, a poem by the Rev. R. P. himself after the manner of Scott.

On my return, I was much shocked by finding I had lost my amiable and constant friend the Duchess of Buccleuch—a calamity of unspeakable consequence to her family, her friends, and the country at large. She was at once an example to those of her own rank and a protectress of virtue and merit in those whom fortune had placed under her. My long intimacy in the family enabled me to observe some instances of her judgment and beneficence, which I now can hardly recollect without tears. I thought to have inscribed to her the work at which I was labouring; but, alas! it will now only renew my sincere and peculiar share¹ in a grief which is almost national. I beg pardon for intruding this melancholy subject upon you but it will be long uppermost in the thoughts of those who shared the friendship of this lovely and lamented woman. Believe me, my dear friend, ever most truly yours, WALTER SCOTT
[*Letters of Sir Walter Scott 1832 and Polwhele's Traditions*]

TO THOMAS SCOTT

[Oct. 1814]

DEAR TOM,—A novel here called Waverley, has had enormous success. I sent you a copy, and will send you another, with the Lord of the Isles, which will be out at Christmas. The success which it has had, with some other circumstances, has induced people

“To lay the bantling at a certain door,

Where lying store of faults, they'd fain heap more.”¹

You will guess for yourself how far such a report has credibility; but by no means give the weight of your opinion to the Transatlantic public; for you must know there is also a counter-report, that *you* have written the said Waverley. Send me a novel intermixing your exuberant and natural humour, with any incidents and descriptions of scenery you may see—particularly with characters and traits of manners. I will give it all the

¹ *Letters of Sir Walter Scott* has “record my severe pain and peculiar share.”

cobbling that is necessary, and, if you do but exert yourself, I have not the least doubt it will be worth £500 ; and, to encourage you, you may, when you send the MS., draw on me for £100, at fifty days' sight—so that your labours will at any rate not be quite thrown away. You have more fun and descriptive talent than most people ; and all that you want—*i.e.* the mere practice of composition—I can supply, or the devil's in it. Keep this matter a dead secret, and look knowing when Waverley is spoken of. If you are not Sir John Falstaff, you are as good a man as he, and may therefore face Colville of the Dale. You may believe I don't want to make you the author of a book you have never seen ; but if people will, upon their own judgment, suppose so, and also on their own judgment give you £500 to try your hand on a novel, I don't see that you are a pin's-point the worse. Mind that your MS. attends the draft. I am perfectly serious and confident, that in two or three months you might clear the cobs. I beg my compliments to the hero who is afraid of Jeffrey's scalping knife.¹

[Lockhart]

¹ In an undated letter which Douglas (*Familiar Letters*) assigns to 1815, but must be earlier if this letter be rightly dated, as its reference to *Waverley* and the *Lord of the Isles* shows, Tom Scott writes : " Yesterday morning Captain Norton, the chief of the Five Nations, left. I had the pleasure to be his intimate acquaintance, and he is a man who makes you almost wish to be an Indian chief. What do you think of a man speaking the language of about twelve Indian nations, English, French, German, and Spanish, all well, being in possession of all modern literature—having read with delight your *Lady of the Lake*, and translated the same, together with the Scriptures, into Mohawk—having written a history of the five nations, and a journal of his own travels, now in London ready for publication, and being at the same time an Indian chief, living as they do and following all their fashions. For, brother, you ask doth he paint himself, scalp, &c., &c.? I answer yea, he doth ; and with the most polished manner of civilised life, he would not disdain to partake of the blood of his enemy at the banquet of sacrifice. Yet I admire and love the man, and would cheerfully give fifty guineas that you could see him for one half-hour. He is afraid that the *Edinburgh Review* will be hard on his book. I promised to write to you to have it reviewed in the *Quarterly*. It surely is a strange circumstance that an Indian Chief should produce a literary child. . . ." The " Travels," Douglas pointed out, were never published, but Norton's translation of the Gospel of St. John is noticed in the *Quarterly*, vol. xxxvi. pp. 9-11.

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—I was duly favoured with your obliging letter with State of W.¹ which is quite satisfactory. I observe I have over-drawn about £36 0 0. Presuming the expence of advertizing will be somewhat less on the 3rd. Edition the profits divisible will be above £440 to each party. Now my pressing occasions will oblige me to anticipate £400 of this by a Drat. on you at six months, which as the book will be out in a fortnight & is a ready money article would not I know in the general case be at all inconvenient to you. In these hard times however it may be that this may not quite suit you in which case I can suit my convenience by disposing of copies at sale price² to the extent of £440—being the authors interest in this new edition. But then the purchaser would I suspect desire a more effectual share in future editions & might besides materially interfere with your sale—This you will consider believing at the same time that it is only the peculiar circumstances of my situation making it absolutely necessary to me to realize my funds one way or other which occasions my offering an alternative of this nature & that I will have the greatest regret in at all interfering with your interest in this work either now or hereafter. I have desired J. B. to talk to you about this

¹ i.e. *Waverley*.

² i.e. to another publisher. Constable's letters at this time show that he is labouring under great financial stress. In October he negotiates with Longmans to take over half of the *Edinburgh Review*. The *Encyclopaedia* has proved a great burden, "but who would not have purchased the Encyc. Brit. under our then Circumstances? Who could have reckoned on the death of partners so near each other & to us so important? If misfortune should follow on misfortune we cannot help it—all that is now to be done is to pay off, & get into as quiet water as possible—but to attempt this [is not] desirable as it too rapidly may bring ruin and even greater ruin than our allowing things to go to the utmost extremity. I have not acted dishonestly to any one in my dealings. If I have embarked largely in Bookselling have I not been encouraged to do so? I have it is true been most unfortunate in following many plans more for the benefit of my connections than that of myself &c."—Constable to Cadell, 18th October 1814.

matter in case any thing can be hit upon which may suit us both.

Somerville is finishd & I presume deliverd. I have a claim upon you for one half print & paper & Longman for the other which can be adjusted later in the month if this present business is closed. Believe me Dear Sir
Yours very truly
WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 9th. October [1814]

[*Stevenson and a copy in the Kilpatrick volume*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE, BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH¹

ABBOTSFORD, Oct. 14, 1814

DEAR JOHN,—Charles Erskine wishes his money, as he has made a purchase of land. This is a new perplexity—for paid he must be forthwith, as his advance was friendly and confidential. I do not at this moment see how it is to be raised, but believe I shall find means. In the meanwhile, it will be necessary to propitiate the Leviathans of Paternoster-row. My idea is, that you or James should write to them to the following effect :—That a novel is offered you by the Author of *Waverley* ; that the Author is desirous it should be out before Mr. Scott's poem, or as soon thereafter as possible ; and that having resolved, as they are aware, to relinquish publishing, you only wish to avail yourselves of this offer to the extent of helping off some of your stock. I leave it to you to consider whether you should condescend on any particular work to offer

¹“ Upon receiving this letter, John Ballantyne suggested to Scott that he should be allowed to offer, not only the new novel, but the next edition of *Waverley* to Longman, Murray, or Blackwood—in the hope that the prospect of being let in to the profits of the already established favourite would overcome effectually the hesitation of one or other of these houses about venturing on the encumbrance ” (*i.e.* unsaleable books) “ which Constable seemed to shrink from with such pertinacity ; but upon this ingenious proposal Scott at once set his veto.”—LOCKHART, who then prints the letter that follows this one.

them as bread to their butter—or on any particular amount—as £500. One thing must be provided, that Constable shares to the extent of the Scottish sale—they, however, managing. My reason for letting them have this scent of roast meat is, in case it should be necessary for us to apply to them to renew bills in December.

Yours,

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

Oct. 17, 1814

DEAR JOHN,—Your expedients are all wretched, as far as regards me. I never will give Constable, or any one, room to say I have broken my word with him in the slightest degree. If I lose everything else, I will at least keep my honour unblemished ; and I do hold myself bound in honour to offer him a *Waverley*, while he shall continue to comply with the conditions annexed. I intend the new novel to operate as something more permanent than a mere accommodation ; and if I can but be permitted to do so, I will print it before it is sold to any one, and then propose, first to Constable and Longman—second, to Murray and Blackwood—to take the whole at such a rate as will give them one-half of the fair profits ; granting acceptances which, upon an edition of 3000, which we shall be quite authorized to print, will amount to an immediate command of £1500 ; and to this we may couple the condition, that they must take £500 or £600 of the old stock. I own I am not solicitous to deal with Constable alone, nor am I at all bound to offer him the new novel on any terms ; but he, knowing of the intention, may expect to be treated with, at least, although it is possible we may not deal. However, if Murray and Blackwood were to come forward with any handsome proposal as to the stock, I should certainly have no objection to James's giving the pledge of the Author of *W.* for his next work. You are like the crane

in the fable, when you boast of not having got anything from the business ; you may thank God that it did not bite your head off. Would to God I were at let-a-be for let-a-be ;—but you have done your best, and so must I.¹

Yours truly,

W. S.

[*Lockhart*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE ²

[Extract]

17th October 1814

DEAR JOHN,—I received your letter with the astonishing news of James's utter *disregard to his own credit*. He promised to let me have accounts of his prospects, and consult me upon the management of his cash affairs, but *he has kept his word but lamely*. He is even worse than you, for you generally give a day or two's notice at least of the chance of dishonour, and this pointing is little better. His Kelso expedition has proved a fine one.

[*Ballantyne-Humbug Handled*]

¹ These last two sentences belong to a letter of 27th Sept. See vol. i, Appendix, p. 457, and for full letter of 17th Oct., p. 464.

² This letter to John seems to have arisen from there having been a distraint (pointing) for debt put in force against James during a visit of his to Kelso. James replies to Scott's letter on 23rd October : "I have received your packet containing the preface to *Waverley* and copy for the poem. It is quite needless to say anything more of the pointing. It is one of the fifty things which happen to sour the temper, and I by no means wonder that you see the matter under an aspect different from that in which I regard it, and apply to it epithets which do not strike me as justly belonging to it. Meantime I trust *the printing will cease to be that burden which hitherto it has been*. As to my own expenditure I have not yet been able to take the funds for it with anything like regularity. On the contrary, often when I had appropriated a sum to pay my own little accounts, have I been forced to turn it into the channel of wages or bills," and he goes on to indicate his attempts at retrenchment and the cause of his troubles, namely, "beginning in debt and without capital and always heavily in advance." I take this to indicate that Ballantyne had suffered a distraint for his personal debts owing to his entire dependence on the business, and that this had need of all the money for its debts and bills. Having no money of his own he has to take more from the business than he is entitled to or to suffer for his own personal dates. See *The Ballantyne-Humbug*

TO JOHN RICHARDSON

I WAS at Bowhill when your most acceptable letter came here & do not lose a moment in acquainting you with what pleasure I will receive you & Mrs. Richardson (whose name should come first) upon the 25th. You can easily reach us to dinner at five & the postillions from Bankhouse know the ford well. I trust you will give us all the time you can spare & look at the banks of Yarrow Melrose & our other lions wild and tame. I was just about to make this my request when your letter arrived. Mrs. Scott sends many kind remembrances and will have much pleasure in an opportunity of making Mrs. Richardson's acquaintance. Many thanks for the *Cavalleresca*¹ book. I may say with the courtier in Timon of Athens "God bless that good friend he is always *sending*"—pray bring it with you though it is giving me rufles when wanting a shirt; since for the first time these twenty five

Handled, pp. 43 ff. I was inclined to think that the letter was really to John, for he too had been at Kelso on business. On the 15th October he writes to Constable: "I am just returned from the *south* where after everything having been done that could be done, I am still £310 short of paying the sums due on Tuesday and the 19th." He goes on to beg for "such a letter as I may send to my principal [*i.e.* Scott] to exonerate me for his bills coming back, as I am really wearied in mind with being so bandied about, and so dead tired with my journeys on a little exhausted horse that I can do no more." He then states the counterclaims between his firm and Constable and goes on: "Can you stead us, therefore, in this £310 by a part loan in cash till the end of the month and acceptance (for us to retire when due) for the balance or otherwise as you incline? If not, I trust you will be very specific to me in your terms of refusal as, on my credit and veracity, there is due on the 18/19 a dft. of S's £250 and £104, £300, and £42-13-4 to three other quarters which *cannot* (having already been) be renewed in time, for which I am £310 short; and I shall pay none of them unless I can pay all."—*Constable and his Literary Correspondents*, vol. iii. pp. 65-66.

Some steps were taken which are referred to in Scott's letter to Constable of 22nd October, p. 510.

¹ Maffei, Scipione, *Della Scienza chiamata cavalleresca*, libri tre. Alla Santità di Nostro Signore Papa Clemente Undecima, in Roma MDCCX [1710], presso Francesco Gonzaga in Via Lata. For fuller information see G. E. Levi and J. Gelli, *Bibliografia del Duello*, Firenze, 1903. Maffei's is a well-known work and reached an eighth edition.

years I am positively without a riding horse. Yours in
haste to save post

W. SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 17 October 1814

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

To JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—The dissensions of your great potentates of literature in the case of *Marmion* was the only reason of my not proposing to you to be a sharer in the Lord of the Isles. From personal regard I would willingly have given you (since you think it is like to prove advantageous) the share you wish but you know how disagreeable it is to be involved in disputes among ones publishers which you cannot accomodate. In casting about how I might show you some mark of my sense of former kindness a certain MS history of Scotland in letters to my children¹ has occurr'd to me which I consider as a desideratum : it is upon the plan of Lord Littletons letters as they are call'd. A small experimental edition might be hazarded in spring without a name not that I am anxious upon the score of secrecy but because I have been a great publisher of late. About this I shall be glad to speak with you & I am happy to find I shall have an opportunity of seeing you at this place on Wednesday or Thursday next week which will give me great pleasure as I want to hear about Ellis and Gifford but especially about Lord Byron. Yours very truly

W. SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 20th October [1814]

John Murray Esq.

Care of Mr. Blackwood Bookseller Edinburgh

[*John Murray*]

¹ These have never come to light, so far as I know, but probably formed the basis of the later *Tales of a Grandfather*, written for John Hugh Lockhart.

TO MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.¹

DEAR SIR,—I had your letter with the list of Bills which is quite satisfactory. I have written to Mr. Ballantyne to call upon you and make the renewals in the way that your convenience and the facilities of discount render most adviseable. I presume it may be adviseable to transfer part of the credit due upon the three Swift bills to some of the others so as to get the whole out of the market so much sooner. But of this you mercantile gentlemen are best judges. I have many reasons for wishing to have these transactions as much as possible under my own eye and will be obliged to you to apply to me directly when the least dilemma occurs. I think I stated in my last letter *distinctly* that I had not the *least intention* of giving you any trouble in the way of accommodation for which indeed I do not foresee I shall have the least occasion; our present and future agreements are of course regulated by their own terms and I shall be at all times most desirous that you should derive benefit from them corresponding to the advantage you have afforded us by assisting credit during the last twelvemonth. I state this very distinctly because I wish you to be convinced of it. The accompt of W[averley] is very properly given and I trust we will have more to settle on the same terms. I trust little odds and ends will cover the 10 per Cent. which if I mistake not is a general arrangement with your London Agents. I expect Mr. John Murray here in a day or two which trifling circumstance I mention to put you upon your guard against

¹ This letter, omitting without indication the last two paragraphs, is given in *Archibald Constable*, etc., as addressed to Messrs. Constable & Co., and "Sir" is altered to "Sirs." "Messrs. Constable & Co." is on the address of the letter, but Mr. Cadell is the partner Scott is writing to. Constable was in London "raising funds by the sale of stock," bringing Longmans once more into the support of the *Edinburgh Review*, and seeking a sharer in the cost of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. He too was in the opinion of his banker overdrawing his credit seriously.—*Archibald Constable*, etc., iii. 70-1. See also note, p. 504.

any gossip your brethren in the trade are very active in setting afloat. His visit relates to matters in which my Edinburgh friends have not and cannot have any concern.

I believe I mentiond to Mr. Constable that Lord Somerville was to get 30 copies of his book in lieu of the plates which are very handsome. I should think it right Mr. C. calld upon his Lordship in Hill Street and inquired about the plates. Lord Somerville will take it well. I wish you would say so with my compliments.

By the way you have never yet given me a set of Swift and I cannot recollect whether a box containing some papers &c. to be returnd to Mr. Hartstonge of Dublin is with you or Mr. John Ballantyne. I wish you would inquire however about your shop as I should be much grieved if they have fallen aside.—I remain, Dear Sir,
Your obedt Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 22 Oct. 1814

Mr. Caddell.

[*Kilpatrick*]

TO MISS CLEPHANE

MY DEAR MISS CLEPHANE,—I am very happy to find you have made out your journey and have found a pleasant reception¹—Your letter was long in reaching me and I delayd answering it in hope we could have had the pleasure of saying “Come here”—But we find ourselves obliged to be in Edinr next week and till today the Richardson family and a cousin of mine have occupied our spare appartments. Indeed there is little left to see upon Tweedside and I am obliged to work like a tiger which

¹ Miss Clephane had written on 11th October from Kirkness, Kelly Bridge, Kinross, the home of her grandmother, describing a journey from Torloisk (after Scott's yacht had left) to Jura and other places, including Murthly Castle, till she arrived unexpectedly at her early home. She has read *Waverley* and suspects who is the author, but asks: “Why did not the author allow me to be his Gaelic dragoman? Oh Mr. — whoever you are you might have trusted me.” She thinks of spending the winter in Edinburgh.

makes a very dull family. So our first meeting will be in Castle Street. I assure you I know nothing of Waverley more than the public does—If I had wished to write good gaelic I should have known where to have applied. We had a precious calm after quitting Torloisk to punish us for refusing Mrs. Clephanes kind invitation and I suppose we have affronted Staffa¹ by leaving the Sound without seeing him—We saw the Giants causeway which is not nearly equal to Staffa though a grand thing too in its way chiefly from the great height of the cliffs streaked with a variety of strata and ridges of columnar rocks rising the one above the other. I was much shocked by learning while on the coast of Ireland the inexpressible misfortune which her family and all who knew her had sustained in the loss of the Duchess of Buccleuch. I have been very much at Bowhill since the Duke seemed to wish it in his present calamity² and I must again be there for a day or two next week before leaving this place. A letter thus came here for you but being directed Ashestiel lay at Selkirk for some time. I now forward it. I have a great deal to say but as my eyes are getting weak with writing by candle-light I must refer it to meeting. Mrs. Scott requests kind compliments and hopes to have the pleasure of seeing you often during your stay in Edinr. Believe me dear Mrs. Clephane Most truly and respectfully yours

ABBOTSFORD. 29 October 1814.

WALTER SCOTT

[*Northampton*]

¹ "When we come on board" [after dining with the Clephanes] "we learn that Staffa Macdonald is just come to his house of Ulva—this is a sort of unpleasant dilemma, for we cannot now go there without some neglect towards Mrs. Maclean Clephane; and, on the other hand, from his habits with all of us, he may be justly displeased with our quitting his very threshold without asking for him. However, upon the whole matter, and being already under weigh, we judge it best to work out of the loch" (Scott's diary).—LOCKHART. The Macleans and Macdonalds were still at feud with one another. See Mrs. McCunn's *Sir Walter Scott's Friends*, p. 97.

² It would be when on such a visit that the portion of Scott's diary of his tour round Scotland recording the receipt at Portrush of the news of the death of the Duchess was transcribed for the Duke. It is preserved among the Buccleuch letters, headed "Bowhill, Oct. 21, 1814."

To JOSEPH TRAIN

SIR,—I was greatly entertained by your favour containing an Account of some curious superstitions in Galloway—the frolics of the flying farmer and the persecuting spirit deserve well to be recorded in prose or verse. I did not get your letter until I returned from a pretty long voyage and have since been engaged with business partly domestic, partly literary. I am now to request a favour which I think your interest in Scottish antiquities will induce you readily to comply with. I am very desirous to have some account of the present state of Turnberry Castle¹—whether any vestiges of it remain, what is the appearance of the ground, the names of the neighbouring places, etc. etc. Above all what are the traditions of the place (if any) concerning its memorable surprise by Bruce upon his return from the coast of Ireland in the commencement of the brilliant part of his career. The purpose of this is to furnish some hints for notes to a work in which I am presently engaged and I need not say I will have pleasure in mentioning the source from which I derive my information. I have only to add with the modest impudence of a lazy correspondent that the sooner you can oblige me with an answer if you can assist me on this subject it will be the greater obligation to me who am already Your obliged humble servt.

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD. 7 Novr. 1814.

Direct to Edinburgh where I shall be next week by Thursday.

[Mrs. Dunn]

¹ For the *Lord of the Isles*. Train replies on 18th November that, not trusting his memory, he has ridden through the whole district again, and he proceeds to supply full details in more than one letter.—*Walpole Collection*.

TO DANIEL TERRY

ABBOTSFORD, *November 10, 1814*

MY DEAR TERRY,—I should have long since answered your kind letter by our friend Young, but he would tell you of my departure with our trusty and well-beloved Erskine, on a sort of a voyage to Nova Zembla. Since my return, I have fallen under the tyrannical dominion of a certain Lord of the Isles. Those Lords were famous for oppression in the days of yore, and if I can judge by the posthumous despotism exercised over me, they have not improved by their demise. The *peine forte et dure* is, you know, nothing in comparison to being obliged to grind verses ; and so devilish repulsive is my disposition, that I can never put my wheel into constant and regular motion, till Ballantyne's devil claps in his proofs, like the hot cinder which you Bath folks used to clap in beside an unexperienced turnspit, as a hint to be expeditious in his duty. O long life to the old hermit of Prague,¹ who never saw pen and ink !—much happier in that negative circumstance than in his alliance with the niece of King Gorboduc.

To talk upon a blither subject, I wish you saw Abbotsford, which begins this season to look the whimsical, gay, odd cabin, that we had chalked out. I have been obliged to relinquish Stark's plan, which was greatly too expensive. So I have made the old farm-house my *corps de logis*, with some outlying places for kitchen, laundry, and two spare bed-rooms, which run along the east wall of the farm-court, not without some picturesque effect. A perforated cross, the spoils of the old kirk of Galashiels, decorates an advanced door, and looks very well. This little sly bit of sacrilege has given our spare rooms the name of *the chapel*. I earnestly invite you to a *pew* there,

¹ Bonos dies, Sir Toby ; for, as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King Gorboduc : " That that is is," so I, being Master Parson, am Master Parson ; for, what is " that " but " that," and " is " but " is " ?—*Twelfth Night*, Act IV. Sc. ii.

which you will find as commodious for the purpose of a nap as you have ever experienced when, under the guidance of old Mrs. Smollett, you were led to St. George's, Edinburgh.

I have been recommending to John Kemble (I daresay without any chance of success) to peruse a MS. Tragedy of Maturin's (author of Montorio :) it is one of those things which will either succeed greatly or be damned gloriously, for its merits are marked, deep, and striking, and its faults of a nature obnoxious to ridicule. He had our old friend Satan (none of your sneaking St. John Street devils, but the archfiend himself) brought on the stage bodily. I believe I have exorcised the foul fiend—for, though in reading he was a most terrible fellow, I feared for his reception in public. The last act is ill contrived. He piddles (so to speak) through a cullender, and divides the whole horrors of the catastrophe (though God wot there are enough of them) into a kind of drippity-droppity of four or five scenes, instead of inundating the audience with them at once in the finale, with a grand "*gardez l'eau.*" With all this, which I should say had I written the thing myself, it is grand and powerful; the language most animated and poetical; and the characters sketched with a masterly enthusiasm. Many thanks for Captain Richard Falconer.¹ To your kindness I owe the

¹ "The Voyages, Dangerous Adventures, and Imminent Escapes of Capt. Rich. Falconer. Containing the Laws, Customs, and Manners of the Indians in America; his shipwrecks; his marrying an Indian wife; his narrow escape from the Island of Dominico, &c. Intermixed with the Voyages and Adventures of Thomas Randal, of Cork, Pilot; with his Shipwreck in the Baltick, being the only man that escap'd. His being taken by the Indians of Virginia, &c. And an Account of his Death. *The Fourth Edition.* London. Printed for J. Marshall, at the Bible in Gracechurch Street. 1734."

"On the fly-leaf is the following note in Scott's handwriting:—'This book I read in early youth. I am ignorant whether it is altogether fictitious and written upon De Foe's plan, which it greatly resembles, or whether it is only an exaggerated account of the adventures of a real person. It is very scarce, for, endeavouring to add it to the other favourites of my infancy, I think I looked for it ten years to no purpose, and at last owed it to the active kindness of Mr. Terry. Yet Richard Falconer's adventures seem to have passed through several editions.'"—LOCKHART.

two books in the world I most longed to see, not so much for their intrinsic merits, as because they bring back with vivid associations the sentiments of my childhood—I might almost say infancy. Nothing ever disturbed my feelings more than when, sitting by the old oak table, my aunt, Lady Raeburn, used to read the lamentable catastrophe of the ship's departing without Captain Falconer, in consequence of the whole party making free with lime-punch on the eve of its being launched. This and Captain Bingfield,¹ I much wished to read once more, and I owe the possession of both to your kindness. Every body that I see talks highly of your steady interest with the public, wherewith, as I never doubted of it, I am pleased but not surprised. We are just now leaving this for the winter: the children went yesterday. Tom Purdie, Finella, and the greyhounds, all in excellent health; the latter have not been hunted this season!!! Can add nothing more to excite your admiration. Mrs. Scott sends her kind compliments.

W. SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

¹ "The Travels and Adventures of William Bingfield, Esq., containing, as surprizing a Fluctuation of Circumstances, both by Sea and Land, as ever befel one man. With An Accurate Account of the Shape, Nature, and Properties of that most furious, and amazing Animal, the Dog-Bird. Printed from his own Manuscript. With a beautiful Frontispiece. 2 vols. 12mo. London:—Printed for E. Withers, at the Seven Stars, in Fleet Street. 1753."

"On the fly-leaf of the first volume Scott has written as follows:—'I read this scarce little *Voyage Imaginaire* when I was about ten years old, and long after sought for a copy without being able to find a person who would so much as acknowledge having heard of William Bingfield or his Dog-birds, until the indefatigable kindness of my friend Mr. Terry, of the Haymarket, made me master of this copy. I am therefore induced to think the book is of very rare occurrence.'"—LOCKHART.

TO MARIA EDGEWORTH¹

EDINBURGH, 10th November 1814

MADAM—I am desired by the Author of *Waverley*, to acknowledge, in his name, the honour you have done him by your most flattering approbation of his work—a distinction which he receives as one of the highest that could be paid him, and which he would have been proud to have himself stated his sense of, only that being *impersonal*, he thought it more respectful to require my assistance than to write an anonymous letter.

There are very few who have had the opportunities that have been presented to me, of knowing how very elevated is the admiration entertained by the Author of *Waverley* for the genius of Miss Edgeworth. From the intercourse that took place betwixt us while the work was going through my press, *I know* that the exquisite truth and power of your characters operated on his mind at once to excite and subdue it. He felt that the success of his book was to depend upon the characters, much more than upon the story ; and he entertained so just and so high an opinion of your eminence in the management of both, as to have strong apprehensions of any comparison which might be instituted betwixt his picture and story and yours ; besides, that there is a richness and *naïveté* in Irish character and humour, in which the Scotch are certainly defective, and which could hardly fail, as he thought, to render his delineations cold and tame by the contrast. “ If I could but hit Miss Edgeworth’s wonderful power of vivifying all her persons, and making them live as real *beings* in your mind, I should not be afraid : ”—Often has the Author of *Waverley* used such language to

¹ This letter, though signed “James Ballantyne,” is obviously Scott’s composition—in the main. Lockhart states that Scott desired James Ballantyne to send to Miss Edgeworth a copy of *Waverley* on its first appearance inscribed “from the author.” This seems to be a mistake, for Miss Edgeworth, in a letter to which this is a reply (quoted in an article in the *Glasgow Herald*, 21st November 1921), tells him that she had got a sight of the story as a great favour from a friend.

me ; and I knew that I gratified him most when I could say,—“Positively this is equal to Miss Edgeworth.” You will thus judge, Madam, how deeply he must feel such praise as you have bestowed upon his efforts. I believe he himself thinks the Baron the best drawn character in his book—I mean the Bailie—honest Bailie Macwheeble. He protests it is the most *true*, though from many causes he did not expect it to be the most popular. It appears to me, that amongst so many splendid portraits, all drawn with such strength and truth, it is more easy to say which is your favourite, than which is best. Mr. Henry Mackenzie agrees with you in your objection to the resemblance to Fielding. He says, you should never be forced to recollect, *maugre* all its internal evidence to the contrary, that such a work is a work of fiction, and all its fine creations but of air. The character of Rose is less finished than the author had at one period intended ; but I believe the characters of humour grew upon his liking, to the prejudice, in some degree, of those of a more elevated and sentimental kind. Yet what can surpass Flora, and her gallant brother ?

I am not authorized to say—but I will not resist my impulse to say to Miss Edgeworth, that another novel, descriptive of more ancient manners still, may be expected ere long from the Author of *Waverley*. But I request her to observe, that I say this in strict confidence—not certainly meaning to exclude from the knowledge of what will give them pleasure, her respectable family.

Mr. Scott’s poem, the *Lord of the Isles*, promises fully to equal the most admired of his productions. It is, I think, equally powerful, and certainly more uniformly polished and sustained. I have seen three cantos. It will consist of six.

I have the honour to be, Madam, with the utmost admiration and respect, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*Lockhart*]

TO JOSEPH TRAIN¹

DEAR SIR,—Your information was extremely interesting and acceptable particularly that which related to the supposed supernatural appearance of the fire which I hope to make some use of it gives a fine romantic colour to the whole story.—Now I have a question or two to trouble you with, I observe the metrical history of Bruce (by Barbour who lived near the period) says the fire was kindled on Turnbury Neuk. Does this correspond with the situation of the Bogle Brae? or what is the exact position of the Bogle Brae with regard to the Castle, to the sea, and to the Isle of Arran? Barbour calls the person whom Bruce detached as his confidant, Cuthbert, but these [are] slight discrepancies, considering the remoteness of the event.— If any other tradition should come to your knowledge respecting this remarkable story, I will beg you to continue your kindness in forwarding it, for as the Applications of Charity usually conclude,—“ the smallest donation will be thankfully accepted.” I remain, Sir, Your obliged Servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH. 22d. Nov. 1814.

[*Mrs. Dunn*]

TO LADY ABERCORN

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I should be most unjustifiable indeed were I capable for a moment of forgetting your

¹ Train's letter is cited in Scott's Note 3 B. to the *Lord of the Isles* : “ The only tradition now remembered of the landing of Robert the Bruce in Carrick relates to the fire seen by him from the Isle of Arran. It is still generally reported, and religiously believed by many, that this fire was really the work of supernatural power, unassisted by the hand of any mortal being ; and it is said that, for several centuries, the flame rose yearly on the same hour of the same night of the year, on which the King first saw it from the turrets of Brodick Castle ; and some go so far as to say that, if the exact time were known, it would be still seen. That this superstitious notion is very ancient is evident from the place where the fire is said to have appeared, being called the Bogles' Brae, beyond the remembrance of man, etc.”

kindness & friendship & I will venture to hope that you have not put such a construction upon my ungracious silence, which would have been long since broken had it been either easy or useful to write up occurrences which have since happened & in which your Ladyship will not doubt my deep & sincere sympathy. I trusted to your goodness to let me hear from you when the renewal of my correspondance under better & happier auspices might afford you some amusement—Charlotte held a committee of table linen with the assistance of Mrs. Kemble & the result was that there was none in Edinburgh at that time which she thought likely to maintain the reputation of our Scottish manufacture. She has now formed what she thinks a very handsome one & we will send it to Mr. Wright to be forwarded & he will know the Marquis's direction in town as I have a notion the family is not now in St. James Square. I hope it will come safe & give satisfaction.

My own life has been drained away as usual in business literary labour & lounging about. This summer I had an opportunity of making a very pleasant tour around the northern part of the Island visiting Shetland Orkney the northern extremity of Scotland the Western Islands very thoroughly & then making a run to the coast of Ireland where we attempted to go up to Derry but were prevented by baffling winds & want of time. We saw the Giants causeway however which is a scene of astonishing grandeur. We returned to Grenock after an absence of six weeks in which we had seen a great deal & as we had an excellent yacht belonging to the public service well-arm'd & mand & fitted up for accomodation in the most comfortable manner. So that we lived very happily on board & went ashore whenever & wherever we had a mind. I only regret that I did not get as far as St. Kilda but we were told that the rough weather would have rendered landing out of the question. My principal view in this tour was

to collect materials for improving a poem I have had long lying by me call'd the Lord of the Isles. I am very anxious it should be tolerable as it embraces a very interesting period of Scottish history. I hope to send it to you by Xmas. Swift who rode me like Sinbad's old man of the sea for so many years is now sent to his fate. I wishd to have sent your Ladyship and to one or two other friends a copy of the life but there were too few thrown off so that I could not have that satisfaction without breaking the booksellers sets. It will be the last of my editorial labours that I am determined upon.

My little cottage begins now to look neat [?] & when the wood gets up will soon have a very pleasant appearance. I have the vanity to think that there has been rarely a more rapid alteration for the better within two years.

Charlotte begs her most respectful compliments & will be anxious to hear whether she has been successful in her commission. I beg to be respectfully remembered to the Marquis & am with the greatest sincerity my dear Lady Abercorn, Your truly respectful & attachd friend

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 22 *November* 1814.

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO THE RIGHT HONBLE LORD MONTAGU, BOWHILL,
BY SELKIRK

MY DEAR LORD,—I hope Lady Montagu's good opinion of me (lawyer though I have been) is too deeprooted to be shaken by the suspicious circumstance of her commission having been much more slowly answerd than I could have wishd. But my iron-monger is too great a man to attend to small commissions from which I infer he will be a very little man one of these days. However we have hunted him to bay and I have every reason to hope Lady Douglas has had her chairs some time since

at least they were sent off three Weeks ago. To be sure ready money is a dangerous commodity in a lawyers hands but I have lost so many of my professional habits that I am e'en angry at the man because I cannot get his bill.

But I have a cruel counter petition to your Lordship both as respects your English & Scottish descent and your own regard for letters—It is that you will subscribe for a copy of the poems of Barbours Robert Bruce & Blind Harrays histy. of Sir William Wallace although I fear it will cost your Lordship some money. Tillotson would have divided the reasons for my request thus—

FIRST OF THE WORK.

They are certainly the two most spirited epics considering their date that ever honord the early history of any country. And they have been hitherto publishd in a shape equally inaccurate and void of the necessary elucidation. Moreover it is a work which can hardly be carried through without encouragement of a different kind than that likely to be afforded by public sale being caviare to the multitude.

SECONDLY OF THE EDITOR

who is Dr. Robert Jameson author of the Scottish Dicty. learnd with the most learnd and a prodigy of modern days since he has brought up about a dozen & half of children, collected coins & medals & formd a library upon the income of a seceding clergyman certainly scarce £200 a year.

THIRDLY OF LORD MONTAGU

to whom the doing a kind thing to a man of poverty and worth would be sufficient motive without the interest which his ancestors claim in the history.

The practical application of these doctrines will I think be sumd up in six guineas, if the work gets forward which will depend upon the encouragement given.

My respectful compliments attend Lady Montagu the Duke and family. As his Grace has succeeded in getting rid of Mr. Park I think Bowhill may be made one of the most beautiful things of the kind in Scotland. Ever my dear Lord Your Lordships truly respectful & faithful Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 9th Decr. [1814]

[*Buccleuch*]

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE

EDINR. 9th Decr. 1814

MY DEAR HARTSTONGE,—I have been as busy, not as one bee, but as a whole hive, or I would long since have written to thank you for the various tokens of your kind remembrance. The Drawings are truly beautiful, and the damage which the elegant commode sustained in [*a gap in the copy*] care was of a nature easily repaired. I am glad the box has cast up safe. I promise you I did not neglect immediately making enquiry after it, and received the satisfactory information that it reached Molesworth Street in safety— I will soon send you the Lord of the Isles a [*a gap*]¹ 4to. But Quartos are the fashion, for I have just this instant received Lucien Bonaparte's *Epique* in 2—4to. Volumes, so that the Emperor may say with Peter Pindars Dutchman,

Mine Broder is de bestest Poet,
Him cannot fail to please,
For he have written one book,
As big as all this cheese.

I am like to remain a mere admirer of the exterior of these Volumes, for French verse always sounds to me like the sing-song of a Tinsmith's Hammer, and I doubt whether the interest of a long *Epique*, in all the forms [and]

¹ A word is omitted—probably “thumping”; see letter to Southey, p. 530.

no less than thirty Cantos, is likely to reconcile me to the inharmonious sound of the Versification. The French language is certainly the most unfit for Poetry that ever was uttered. I do not believe there are 20 words in the language, that can be properly termed *poetical*, that is that are not equally used in Poetry or Prose, and this alone gives poverty and meanness to their verses. The Poem is inscribed to the Pope, with the deepest expressions of affection and regard. Southey has brought out a noble Poem entitled Roderick King of the Goths—it is truly a grand exertion, and comprehends some of the finest subjects for painting I have ever read. You will be surprized to hear I was on the coast of Ireland this summer, as far as the Giant's Causeway, which is immensely fine. I had a wandering voyage of it in Light house Yacht, which circumnavigated all Scotland; and visited what ever was interesting on the mainland or Islands—The sea agreed with me very well, our accomodations were excellent, and the Commissioners on board being very intimate Friends, indulged me, as well as themselves in going where our curiosity called us. We ran up Loch Foyle with a view of visiting Derry so famous for its defence at the time of the Revolution, but the wind was unfavourable, and about that time I heard of the death of a Friend, which made me extremely desirous to return to Scotland—otherwise I believe we would have come on to Dublin. We had too some little alarm from an American Cruiser, and were twice obliged to prepare for fighting— I am very glad to observe that you have been spending your time pleasantly at Cork. Were it not for my Family, and the extraordinary expense, which incrases I think yearly, I know few modes of spending my time that would give me so much pleasure as travelling. But I have no time to spin out my letter, and must conclude myself as usual Your's

W. S.

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JAMES ELLIS, OF OTTERBORNE

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been long your debtor as a Correspondent and otherwise having to thank you for the chorographia¹ as well as for your letter. I find I have the chorographia in the Harleian miscellany and cannot therefore in conscience deprive you of your copy and will take some safe opportunity to return it but your midland and retired situation makes access to it not very easy for parcels. I will therefore send it with a parcel of another description to John Bell, Bookseller at Newcastle our Brother Antiquary—I have not yet made out my sketch of Otterburne having been busy with a new poem the Lord of the Isles of which I hope to send you soon a Copy. I begin to be impatient about Bedingfield and Pickering. I trust the work is going on although your communication with the press must be often interrupted. This year I made a very pleasant tour with a Committee of the Commissioners of the Northern Lighthouses who resemble the Trinity House of London in their duties

¹ On 23rd May Ellis had written to Scott: "Excited by an expression of yours when you favoured me with a passing visit here I have been collecting the poems of my friends Bedingfield and Pickering and have secured several pieces of the latter but none of the former that I had not before. This will make only a very thin volume." He would like to dedicate the volume to Scott. On the 16th July he acknowledges letters of 26th May and 18th June (which are not extant); thanks him for permission to dedicate; has anticipated Scott's suggestion of giving some account of B. and P., though there are some details he cannot publish, but will communicate to Scott when he sees him; he has added some "baubles of my own." Scott has been made a member of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries and has, he hopes, received "Grey's Chorographia (of Newcastle)," "the only Thing the Society has yet printed." In the letter of May Ellis had also told how the old stone Long Robin of Risingham, which he and Scott had visited, had been visited by so many tourists that the farmer of the ground on which it stood (one Shanks according to a note on the Abbotsford copy) had cut it up for gate-posts. On the 26th September he acknowledges a letter of 24th July, in which Scott had suggested a republication of the *Laws of the Border*. Such a work would, Ellis thinks, correct misinterpretations in Nicolson's work (*Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland*, 1777) and that of Ridpath (*Border History*, etc., 1776). On 14th December he writes again to announce Bedingfield, etc.

and powers. We made a Complete Circuit of the northern part of the Island visiting the Shetland and Orkney Islands touching at many places on the main land—in Sutherland & Argyleshire and the Western Isles. As we had a Yacht fitted up for accomodation belonging to the service and were completely well man'd we carried on our proceedings in a great stile of convenience. I agreed very well with the sea upon which we continued for six weeks. The rest of my vacation was spent at Abbotsford which begins now to be a little comfortable if you will take a ride over the border next summer we will have a comfortable bed for Mrs. E. and you and I will stand showman to all the curious places in my neighbourhood.

Pray what is become of the young man who wrote the Reedwater Minstrel.¹ I laid my hands on it the other day and cannot help admiring its rythmical topography which has drawn many proper names into poetical order. I think Mr. Davidson who gave me the Book told me he was infirm and indigent. I cannot yet digest the fate of Robin of Redesdale² poor old fellow. I little thought our adventure in quest of him would have brought him to untimely destruction after having occupied his secluded situation for many centuries. I wish you would keep an eye on the perpetrator—he certainly cannot come to a good end—a halter is greatly too good for him. I would certainly condemn him to the peine forte et dure of the old English law and apply the fragments of Robin to press him to Death or if he rides I wish a good portion of him in his best geldings fore foot shoe or in his own bladder if he is a sedentary person. And after so many maledictions I beg you ever more to mark whether after such an enormity he goes quietly to his Grave like other men.

¹ The name of the author of the Reedwater minstrel was Rob Roxby, one of the principal bookkeepers in the Bank of Sir M. W. Ridley & Co. in Newcastle. See Note H to *Rokeby*.

² Robin of Redesdale is a slip for Robin of Risingham.

Mrs. Scott begs her compliments to Mrs. Ellis & I am
always dear Sir Very truly yours WALTER SCOTT

EDINB. 15 *December* 1814

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOHN RICHARDSON

MY DEAR RICHARDSON,—I hope Mrs. Richardson got safe up to town and experienced no inconvenience from the fatigue of the journey which she did not appear very able to encounter. My principal cause of writing however is a petty matter of business. I have got a great deal of Bookseller's money to receive at this term and have made my arrangements to pay some balance of the price of *Abbotsford &c.* But I find it would be troublesome to get all my bills which amount to upward of £2000 discounted here & it occurred to me that perhaps to the extent of two of £300 might be negotiated in London. They are at 3 or 4 months but I could get them made somewhat shorter and drawn payable in London— Can you aid me in this matter without stepping out of your way— I do not, you will understand, want any advance as loan of money but only the advantage of having my bills discounted without asking favours here. The late bankruptcy of Doig and Stevenson has occasioned a certain check upon this species of credit not very convenient to those whose fee-farms lie on Parnassus. But as I have been a very successful cultivator of the barren Mount I must not grumble at a momentary puzzle. Only do not let this put you to the least inconvenience unless it is what can be done quite quietly & without puzzle for it is a matter of convenience but by no means of essential necessity.

I hope you will remember my kindest compliments to Mrs. Baillie. I intend her a long letter but some divine says that "Pandemonium is paved with good intentions"

—Wilson was with me after you left us and has made a very pretty sketch of our cottage. I will find means to send it if Mrs. Richardson should find time to do Abbotsford the honour which the inclement weather interrupted. Ever dear Richardson Yours very sincerely

EDIN 18 Dec 1814

WALTER SCOTT

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

DEAR SIR,—Agreeable to what I mentiond last week I take the freedom to draw on you for £600 @ 6 months amount in copies of Lord of Isles. This will at my guess be @ £100—over what is due upon the 4to. so must be considered to accot. of both editions. The whole is now set up except a sheet or two of notes which Mr. Ballantyne wishes me to add to bring the work to the size of Lady of [the] Lake. He will have them this day. If the sale of the poem should so far disappoint that your bills do not come in to meet the above or nearly so any part of it may be renewd in terms of our bargain.

I believe we must also be troublesome to you to accept for the printers accot. this week instead of next an accomodation which I do not doubt that you will readily grant Messrs. Ballantyne as the ballance of this sort of accomodation is at present very much in their favour. Believe me Dear Sir Very truly Yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 19 Decr. [1814]

I meant to have calld but am prevented by the rain. Jo: B. will explain anything you want to know about the above.

[*Stevenson*]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

I HAD a most valuable proof of your friendly remembrance, some months ago, in the poem of *Don Roderick*.¹ I know no instance in which your genius has been more successfully and honourably employ'd, and the high tone of poetry mingled with the most generous feelings of patriotism and private virtue would hand you down to posterity one of the highest of British poets, had you never written another line. I will not be tempted to say more upon this subject, except just to mention the interest with which I again perused those passages which I had heard you read at Keswick, and how much I was pleased to find that my memory, not quite so retentive as in early youth, had upon this occasion served me faithfully. I have also to thank you for your official lyrics, which will make up a trio of real poets who have worn the laurel, Spenser, Dryden, and you. Your task will in future be more difficult, for in these piping days of peace what can you find to say—and our transatlantic campaigns have been so managed as to afford few subjects of poetry as laurels for our generals. It is a very humbling consideration that after having faced the lion, we should still be exposed to be gnawed by the rat but it is the natural consequence of despising an enemy,—a consequence of national pride which has ever been its own severe punishment.

My own vacation was partly spent in a very pleasant voyage round the coast and islands of Scotland, of which we made a very complete survey, comprehending Zetland, Orkney, the Hebrides, and the remarkably wild and mountainous deserts of Sutherland and Ross. One cave I saw in particular, which I think greatly exceeds anything of the kind I ever heard of. There is an exterior cavern of great height and breadth and depth, like the vault of a cathedral. Within this huge cave, and opening by a sort of portal, closed half way up with a ledge of rock, we got

¹ *Roderick, the last of the Goths*, 1814.

access to a second cavern, an irregular circle in form, and completely filled with water. This was supplied by a considerable brook which fell from the height of at least eighty feet, through a small aperture in the rocky roof of the cave. The effect of the twilight, composed of such beams as could find their way through the cascade as it fell, was indescribably grand. We hoisted a boat into this subterranean lake, and pursued the adventure by water and land for a great way under ground. Another cave which we visited in the isle of Eigg was strewn with human bones and skulls. The whole inhabitants of the isle having taken refuge in it to escape from the fury of the Macleods, whom they had offended, their lurking-place was discovered, and fire was maintained at the mouth of the cavern until every man and mother's son was suffocated. What a fine subject for Coleridge ! This pleasant adventure only chanced about 150 years ago, as far as we could discover.

I think you will now be mourning for the affairs of Spain. Surely the same Ferdinand the Beloved is like the man, who when a friend had snatched down a fowling-piece, and successfully defended his home against robbers, afterwards very gratefully went to law with him for spoiling the lock of the gun. In two or three days, or rather next week, I will send you a thumping quarto being entitled and called *The Lord of the Isles*.

I was much disappointed at my absence from Abbotsford when Wordsworth called. I should have been particularly happy to have shaken him by the hand. Adieu my dear Southey you have better things to do than to read long letters although I have nothing better to do than to write them unless I rather chuse to listen to a long dry pleading upon an abstract point of Scottish law which is going on at the bar at this moment. Yours very truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR. 22 December 1814

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO JOHN RICHARDSON

MY DEAR RICHARDSON,—Many thanks to you for your two kind letters & your obliging interference with Coutts which is very convenient at this pay term. Old Mr. Coutts¹ & my father were relations, second cousins I believe. I had a very handsome letter from the old gentleman though then in family distress by Lord Bute's death—

Nothing can be more delightful to me than to hear of the well-being of our dear & immortal Joanna, whose good opinion of every kind I prize at least as highly as any good fortune that can befall me. I trust we shall be drinking a cup of tea some day in April next for I seriously propose a skirmish to London with my wife & daughter. I have got the sketch of Abbotsford it is very clever indeed. I will bring it up with me. In a few days I trust you will receive the Lord of the Isles a thumping 4to but not so large a babe as Lucian Bonaparte who has been prolific enough to bring forth twins. It is a cruel dull job that same French Epic and the cursed *ting tang* at the end of the lines reminds me of the clatter of a tinsmith at work. As for the poetry I can say little not having been able to get very far in the book—there is a poverty in the French Language singularly ill adapted for the lofty rhyme— I do not believe there are twenty words in the language which can be considered as set apart for poetical use, so you have them eternally inventing & amplifying their ordinary prose language. Are not you sensible of the difference between language and language when turning from even the best French Poets to the richness of the Italians. The difference in their music or in their painting is scarce more remarkable—it is positive repose & enjoyment—there is something hard & meagre & cold & affected in the French diction that might remind one of the polar climate of Mandeville

¹ i.e. John Coutts (1699-1751), merchant and banker, who became Lord Provost of Edinburgh. He negotiated in bills, "a business which the banks had not yet taken up." His two sons, James and Thomas, founded the banking house of Coutts & Co.

where the very words were frozen & required to be thawed before they could be understood. And so much for Squire Lucian whose battles will hardly make such a noise in the world as his brother's have done. You will see a new work advertized by Author of Waverly. I am told it is from materials put into his hand by a friend—this *entre nous*—Jeffery hath behaved *very genteel* to the said Waverly. Is Tom Campbell returned & what news does he bring. I should like much once more to shake his hand. I hope we shall have his lectures presently in print. I should like very much to see them. Believe me dear Richardson Most truly yours.

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 23 Dec 1814

[*Abbotsford Copies*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

MY DEAR SIR,—I have glanced over *Marmion* and do not see any thing to change. Only I have begd Jas. Ballantyne to correct by the Second edition if possible as it was revised with some care. I am going to *Abbotsford* for the rest of this week to refresh the machine by a little exercise of which I have much need. When I return I hope we will have a *gaudeamus* over the Lord of Isles in Castle Street. Believe me Very truly yours

W. SCOTT

CASTLE STREET *Xmas day* [1814]

[*Stevenson*]

TO CHARLES ERSKINE

MY DEAR CHARLES,—The death of Archd. Ferrier W.S.¹ obliges me to remain in town to perform the Parliament House duty his father being confined of course and no

¹ Brother of Susan Ferrier, the novelist.

other clerk of Session in town but he & I. I send the processes to Selkirk by this coach—also a precognition in the case of a man who has drawn a false bill on a person named Neilson in Liverpool. Expecting to be at Selkirk myself on Wednesday I wrote to Neilson the drawer desiring him to inform me positively whether or no the man had any concern with him or title to suppose his bill would be accepted. I desired him to answer this letter addressing to me at the Sheriff Clerks office Selkirk. If it arrive you will open it & examine the man more particularly than Camiestone has: commit him if it appears he has been swindling and send the precognition in to be laid before the crown folks here. I trust to be out next week instead of this. Yours truly

W. SCOTT

26 Decr. [1814]

My wife begs you will send up the order to Tom Purdie on the other side—You will observe it is a matter of life & death.

[Curle]

TO MISS SUSAN E. FERRIER

[December 1814]

MY DEAR MISS FERRIER,—I had just written to say that Mrs. Scott's indisposition would have detained us here this week independent of the late calamity. At any rate I would rather never have gone out of Edinburgh in my life than consulted my own amusement at the expense of your kind and worthy father's feelings in such a moment. Accept our deep and sincere sympathy and believe me most faithfully and respectfully your obedient servant,

W. SCOTT

[*Memoir of Susan Ferrier*]

TO THE RIGHT HONBLE LORD MONTAGU, BOWHILL,
SELKIRK

[*Private*]

[27th (postmark) December 1814]

MY DEAR LORD MONTAGU,—I expected I should have been at Abbotsford this evening and at Bowhill probably on wednesday but the death of a gentleman the son of one of my colleagues has detain'd me to attend to office business. Will your Lordship have the goodness to look over the lines on the other side of this proof sheet.¹ You will easily conjecture to what they allude—an intention of mine with respect to the poem which has been rendered vain by the event which has been so generally calamitous.

I wish your Lordship to tell me whether you think the allusion will give any pain to the Duke or whether it may afford him a sort of satisfaction however melancholy. You know I have no feelings as an author though sufficiently sensitive as a friend. The late Duchess honord

¹

[27th (postmark) December 1814]

[*The printed stanzas of Conclusion to Canto VI of "The Lord of the Isles," with the corrections that appear in the proof sheet.*]

Go forth, my song, upon thy venturous [*doubtful*] way ;

Go boldly [*venturous*] forth ; nor yet thy master blame,

Who chose no patron for his humble lay,

And graced thy numbers with no friendly name,

Whose partial zeal might smooth thy path to fame.

There was—and O ! how many sorrows crowd

Into these two brief words !—*there was* a claim

By generous friendship given—had fate allow'd,

It well had bid thee rank the proudest of the proud !

All angel now—yet little less than all,

While still a pilgrim in our world below !

What 'vails it us, that patience to recall,

That hid its own, to sooth each [*all*] other'[s] woe ;

What 'vails to tell, how Virtue's purest glow

Shone yet more lovely in a form so fair ;—

And, least of all, what 'vails the world should know,

That one poor garland, turned [*twined*] to deck thy hair,

Is hung upon thy hearse, to droop and wither there !

me with no common share of her confidence & friendship and I cannot think of her even in writing these lines without feelings of exquisite regret & sorrow—in fact fate beyond the limits of my own fire-side could not have made so deep a breach upon me—This is the apology for the attempt but the propriety of the publication must remain with your Lordship who I know will be candid in giving your opinion concerning the way in which it is most likely to affect your brother. I hope to get to Abbotsford next week and will certainly in that case be at Bowhill and will then tell your Lordship all I can about your queries—Excuse the mode in which I write as I am afraid of going beyond privilege in point of weight & favour me with a line in answer when it suits your convenience. Most truly and respectfully your Lordships faithful humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

[*Buccleuch*]

TO JOANNA BAILLIE

N.D. [1814]

MY DEAR MRS. BAILLIE If twenty years at the bar and within the bar had left me any blushes they would absolutely burn the paper when I sit down to write to you. But you are aware I have been very busy and that besides I have been a wanderer on the face not of the earth but of the ocean for a good part of my usual play time. I assure you I can tell you something of *deserts* vast & *antres* dire though I was not so fortunate as to meet any of the honest folks whose heads grow beneath their shoulders.¹ Tales of mermaids however we had many and saw the man who had seen a sea-snake big enough to girdle the earth for what I know. But what I was particularly delighted with was to find that the sea agreed with me so very well that I may venture a little

¹ See *Othello*, Act I. Sc. iii. ll. 144-5.

voyage whenever I have a mind. We were six weeks upon our tour and [visited] almost every remarkable place in Orkney Zetland and the Hebrides. What was not quite so promising a sight we saw an American [*sic*] that same Peacock with the fiery tail which annoyd the trade so much in the channel between Britain and Ireland we were prepared to run as well as we could and fight when we could not help ourselves when a breeze and ridge of rocks to our leeward stood our friend and we got off for the fright.

So you have retired from your former prefix of Miss Joanna Baillie & have adopted the more grave appellation of *Mrs.* Well you may call yourself what you please on the backs of letters and visiting cards but I will warrant you never get posterity to tack either *Miss* or *Mrs.* to the quakerlike Joanna Baillie.—We would as soon have William Shakespeare Esqr.

Richardson was with us one day or two in summer with his wife who seems very pleasing but was then in delicate health with a long journey before her. I am glad to find she got through it well. I shewd Richardson the pinasters—they had sufferd much by the extreme drought of the season but came about a good deal in November. I intend in humble imitation of the Hermit Fincal in the tales of the Ginij to dedicate a seat to you in my bowers that are to be. I hope John Richardson gave a favourable account of them. I assure you though I cannot pretend to walk under their shade (*sic*) of them yet I might find some which would shadow me were I to lie down neath them and you must be aware that this is the more classical and interesting posture of the two. In the meantime we look bare enough. But I will take care they shall make the most of their time and grow very fast if you will promise to come down with your sister and see them next season. I trust however we shall meet before that for I intend to be in London this spring and hope to bring my wife and eldest girl with me. Sophia

is a very good girl and like her namesake in Tom Jones plays and sings papa to sleep after dinner. Only I have the Bonny Earl of Murray, Hughie Graeme, Gil Morrice and so forth instead of Bobbing Joan and St. George for England which soothed the slumbers of honest Squire Western. She only *croons* after all.

I must not forget to tell you with what pleasure I would do anything (except maintain a regular correspondence) to oblige good Dr. Clarke who is a very ingenious and most worthy person. I am sorry he should in the least doubt my continued regard but when I am apologizing for not writing to *you* it is not likely I should have been very regular in writing to others. But I will write to the worthy Doctor and make my apology.

I am very curious to know what progress tragedy has been making and when I am to have a peep. I assure you I shall be most faithful and secret as the grave. Besides I want to hear of the Dr. and Mrs. Baillie and of your sister what you have been all doing and what preparing to do—how you liked Wales & whether it put you in mind of poor old Scotland. There are few countries I long so much to see as Wales—the first time I set out to see [it] I was caught by the way and married God help me—the next time I went to London and spent all my money there—what will be my third interruption I do not know but the circumstances seem ominous.

And now I see from the face of the learned gentleman who is pleading at the bar that he will presently finish a very long very elaborate and very dry pleading upon an abstract point of feudal law. So I shall pack up my papers in my green back [*sic*] and give them to my *Brownie* that is an attendant who does the whole duty of my office if I chuse it and is paid by the public—and then I will go [to] a sale of prints and try to buy a fine one of Charles Edward done in France and suppressed.¹

¹ The sale of Alexander G. Hunter of Blackness, once Constable's partner.

I dare say you like a good Westland Whig wish it may be going—a going—gone before I can get to the sale. Mrs. Scott joins in kind remembrances to you and Mrs. A. Baillie. Ever my dear friend most respectfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

[*Royal College of Surgeons, London*]

TO ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE or R. CADDELL

DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by your attention to the annuity which will indeed make a *serious reduction*. So much so that I think to extinguish the possibility of recurring inconvenience we had better take £5000—at £8 pr. cent which is still greatly less than £4000 at 12 : & altho the income tax was deducted in the former case & not in the last yet there is great room to hope it will be abated though not I fear abolishd so that the abatement will be always [in] my favour. If my health will allow me to work as hard next year as I have done this the burthen will not be of long duration.

I inclose copy of the bond with the letters & am quite sensible of your friendship in the affair. Yours truly

EDINR. 28 Dec. 1814

W. SCOTT

Private

[*Stevenson*]

TO GEORGE THOMSON, TRUSTEES OFFICE

MY DEAR SIR,—I will attend the Commemoration¹ with pleasure if I am not screwed to the chair by a rheumatic complaint which has annoyed me all this winter. I cannot possibly think of taking the chair, having been

¹ Doubtless of the birth of Burns, 25th January. On the 13th December Siddons gave a benefit "for the subscription for raising a national monument to the memory of Mr. R. Burns the poet."—DIBDIN, *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, 1888.

long a stranger to everything like the conducting public festivity, and feeling besides that it would have to some the appearance of conceit, and of coupling myself more nearly with the bard than I have the modesty to attempt. I think the person who should be called to the Chair is decidedly Auchinleck.¹ His talents for the situation are most uncommon, his connection with Burns evident, and as a man of fashion and consequence his name will form a guarantee for the respectability of the meeting, whereas I am so completely retired from everything approaching to general Society that I do not know above four or five of my friends who are likely to attend. Even at a meeting of the Speculative Society² which I attended on Saturday I found myself in the midst of strangers.

I am sorry the benefit turned out so ill, but must relieve Siddons of the blame. He offered Wednesday, but the night happened to be unsuitable to several ladies who proposed to take boxes, to accommodate whom it was changed to Tuesday, and the change, with the time necessary for numerous explanations, &c. &c. &c., run us too short for advertising. I am glad to hear there is some chance of a monument in Edinburgh. A handsome obelisque in Charlotte's or St. Andrew's Square would have a very happy effect.

By the way, the failure of Burns' play is a sufficient warning to me how little personal influence I can reckon upon in Edinburgh Society, for I have scarce a friend alive whom I did not assail upon the occasion. Taking it for granted it will be agreeable for you, I will send your advertisement to Mr. Boswell, and beg him to let you know what he will do for us. I am dear Sir very much your obedt. servt.

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN. 19 [29] *Decr* [1814]

¹ Sir Alexander Boswell.

² The meeting of the Speculative referred to in this letter was held on Saturday, 24th December; the date of Scott's letter should be 29th December, not, as he gives it, 19th December.

Since writing the above I have seen Mr. Boswell, and I find there is every prospect of his being in the country at the time proposed. If not, he will attend like myself as an individual, but cannot accept of office.

[*British Museum*]

TO GEORGE THOMSON

[*Gilbert Burns had applied to Thomson to use his influence in procuring a situation for his son, and Thomson endeavoured to enlist the aid of Scott who replied :*]

[1814]

I ENCLOSE Mr. Burns' interesting letter, which of itself forms an apology for not recommending his son to a situation requiring a bold active pushing disposition. The directors look a good deal to their proposed manager for activity in getting orders as well as in collecting their dues, and I do not think the situation like to have suited a young man of a modest and retiring character. The profits depend on a percentage, and are not on the whole such (at least at present) as would render it advisable to forsake a certainty, though moderate. I would otherwise have been happy to have served a friend of yours, or above all a nephew of R. Burns, with any influence I might have in the matter.

[*Hadden's George Thomson*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[1814]

DEAR JAMES,—I expected you this morning—I send the sheets—the lines you object to in the explanation I retain

—You will observe the *wardship* is no *real* motive¹ with Edith, it is one which she produces to herself as a *plausible* one & I should have thought your knowledge of human nature would have taught you that the ostensible reasons which we produce to ourselves as to others are very different from those which really influence our conduct.² The wardship would have been unnatural as a real motive but is admirable as an excuse. I submit to the other lines standing. They shall not want Guy³ long I promise them. I could really have wished to have seen you today.

W. S.

I just found your note—at bottom of bag. You had better nurse your cold & come tomorrow to breakfast which is less interruption to us both—I wish you could send me up as soon as possible the last copy of notes. I suffer much from neglect to send me running copy or double proofs of them having no means of reference & every thing pressing.

[Glen]

- ¹
- “ Embarrass’d eye and blushing cheek
Pleasure and shame and fear bespeak !
Yet much the reasoning Edith made :
‘ Her sister’s faith she must upbraid,
Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
In council to another’s ear.
Why should she leave the peaceful cell ?
How should she part with Isabel ?
How wear that strange attire agen ?
How risk herself mid martial men ?
And how be guarded on the way ?
At least she might entreat delay.’ ”

—*Lord of the Isles*, vi, 8.

James had probably suggested that, as she had needed no guard in the earlier part of the poem, why should she need it now ?

² As, for example, the real reasons for Scott’s not acknowledging the authorship of *Waverley*, etc.

³ *Guy Mannering*, “ the work of six weeks at a Christmas.”

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

[*November-December 1814*]

DEAR SIR,—You have now the whole affair excepting two or three concluding stanzas. As your taste for bride's cake may incline you to desire to know more of the wedding, I will save you some criticism by saying I have settled to stop short as above. Witness my hand,

W. S.

[*Note to "Lady of the Lake," P.W. 1833-34, p. 460*]

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